OUTLINES OF

BRITISH HISTORY

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
SOCIAL LIFE AND CONDITIONS

BY

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PART I

55 B.C. TO A.D. 1485

PREFACE

THE aim of this book is to present in succinct but at the same time readable form a complete summary of the outstanding events and movements in British history from 55 B.C. to the present day. But ' movements ' are of the people : hence the volume is not a mere chronicle of the doings of kings and other great personages. It is rather a brief record of the development, through the centuries, of the *nation as a whole*—their struggles, their failures, their successes. For this reason, considerable space has been devoted to social and industrial conditions, as well as to the growth of government, both central and local : nor have the causes that have led to the founding and extension of the Empire been overlooked. In short, all that really matters to the young student of history has been briefly recorded.

It is hoped that the volume will be found especially useful in the Upper Classes of Primary Schools and the Lower Forms of Secondary Schools, whether the prescribed course be based upon the Periodic, Concentric, or Aspect treatment of the subject.

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PART I (55 B.C. TO A.D. 1485)

Britain in 55 B.C.

1. IN 55 B.C., Britain was peopled by Celts who, during the preceding centuries, had passed gradually from the East to the West of Europe until they had finally settled **Inhabitants.** in our islands. The Celts were tall and of fair complexion. They had, moreover, attained to some degree of civilisation. But they were not the earliest inhabitants of Britain. Centuries before, a race of short, dark people had migrated from the East of Europe and had made their abode in the island now known as Britain. The Celts, however, proved to be more powerful than the Iberians, as their predecessors are called : consequently, they gradually made themselves masters of the island. But they did not settle in Britain as a result of one migration. It appears that they came at two widely-distant periods. Both branches spoke the same language, although there were differences of dialect. The first arrivals were the Gaelic Celts whose language still survives in the Highlands of Scotland, the Isle of Man, and the West of Ireland. They were succeeded by the Cymric Celts, the descendants of whom are still to be numbered among the inhabitants of Brittany, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. The origin of the term ' Briton ' is doubtful, several derivations having been assigned. It is interesting to note, however, that the name is said to be derived from the Celtic word ' brit,' *i.e.* ' painted,' because it was customary for the Celts to paint or stain the body with the dye called woad.

2. It must not be imagined that the Celts arrived in two vast hordes. New tribes were ever invading the island. Each

Celtic tribe possessed its own leader, who was regarded as a kind of king by his followers. Between tribe and tribe a state **Tribal** of incessant warfare prevailed. By degrees, how-**Settlements.** ever, certain tribes attached themselves to certain districts. The chief of these tribes were the Cantii in Kent, the Ordovices in North Wales, the Silures in South Wales, the Trinobantes in Essex, the Iceni in Norfolk and Suffolk, and the Brigantes in Yorkshire and the adjoining counties.

3. One of the earliest accounts of the ancient Britons is that given by the great Roman general, Julius Caesar, who **Caesar's** first invaded Britain in 55 B.C. With two legions, **Invasions.** *i.e.* about twelve thousand men, Caesar landed in Kent and defeated the natives who opposed his landing; but after a stay of only three weeks, he withdrew. In the following year he brought five legions, including two thousand horse. On the first occasion he did not advance far from his landing-place; but during his second campaign, which lasted about six weeks, he pushed northwards, crossed the Thames, and drove back the British chief Cassivelaunus, chief of the Trinobantes. The results of the invasions were: (1) Caesar prevented the Britons from sending further aid to the Gauls against the Romans; (2) he enriched himself by exacting tribute and carrying off hostages 'whose ransoms did the general coffers fill.' Having achieved his purpose, Caesar withdrew his forces. But no Roman garrison was left in Britain.

4. Julius Caesar was not only a great soldier, but a writer and a statesman. In one of his books, *The Gallic War*, which **British** of course was written in Latin, he describes the **Civilisation.** condition of the native British at the time of his invasions. He tells us that the tribes living near the coast were less barbarous than those of the interior. Agriculture was an important occupation; so much so that quantities of corn were exported to the Continent. Among the exports were also included hides, furs, hounds, slaves, tin and lead. The clothing of the Britons consisted, for the most part, of thick, coarse cloth; although finer articles of apparel were not

unknown, and there appeared to be an abundance of ornaments for personal adornment. Weapons, including helmets, spears, swords, daggers, and shields, were plentiful ; whilst the two-wheeled war-chariots were fitted with scythe-blades which did much damage when driven into the ranks of the enemy, prior to the hand-to-hand combat which ensued. The Britons were also skilled in fort-making, and in the navigation of both sea and river.

As the interior of the island was, for the most part, uncleared, the natives there were less civilised. Their chief occupations were hunting and fishing, by means of which they provided themselves with flesh to eat and the skins of fur-bearing animals to wear.

The Romans were not the first foreigners to visit the shores of Britain. As early as the twelfth century before Christ, the people of Phoenicia (a country of Asia Minor) were known as the chief navigators of the world. Both Phoenician and other traders had frequently visited Britain in order to engage in trade with the natives who dwelt on the southern shore of the island. This fact accounts for the advance in civilisation made by the Britons inhabiting the coast-region.

5. But in spite of the differences in the degree of civilisation and the division into tribes, the Britons were united in one common religion. Their numerous gods were usually the personification of the wonders of **The Druids.** Nature ; *e.g.* sun, moon, fire, water, serpent, and the oak. Because the Britons worshipped in ' groves of oak,' their priests were called Druids from the Gaulish word ' dru ' (oak). The Druids were priests, judges, medicine-men, magicians, lawyers, and teachers. They surrounded themselves with the utmost secrecy : hence no written word of their lore has been handed down. There were two inferior orders, besides the Druids proper, namely, the Vates or priests who were responsible for the sacrificing of victims, and the Bards or prophets. The last-named constituted the literary order, devoted to the harp and song. All Druids were exempt from both military service and taxation : hence they exerted considerable influence

over tribal chiefs. The cutting of the sacred mistletoe with a golden knife by the white-robed Druid was a mystic rite.

6. The English language still bears numerous traces of the Celtic occupation of Britain. Many of these words are geo-
Traces of Celtic Occupation. graphical names : *e.g.* (1) *Rivers*—Thames, Avon, Exe, Ouse, Severn, Dee, Don, Cam, Wye, Lane, etc. ; (2) *Mountains and hills*—Mendip, Pen-
maenmawr, together with numerous forms of *ben*, a word meaning *hill*; (3) *Towns*—Caerleon, Carlisle, Caernarvon, Penrith, Penzance, etc. ; (4) *Counties*—Cornwall, Glamorgan, etc. Celtic words denoting menial occupations are also common : *e.g.* clout, mop, darn, gown, pail, cabin, etc.

Quite apart from language, however, there are traces of Celtic occupation in the numerous articles discovered in tombs.

Roman Britain (A.D. 43 to 410)

7. After Caesar's departure in 54 B.C., Britain saw no more of Rome, except her merchants, for ninety-seven years. During
Roman Conquest of Britain. the interval, the Britons of the south-east, owing to their intercourse with the Continent, continued to progress in civilisation. But British chiefs, worsted in their tribal wars, constantly appealed to Rome for assistance. For this reason, and because of the interests of Roman merchants, the Emperor Claudius decided in A.D. 43 to undertake the conquest of Britain. This was the beginning of the military occupation of Britain by the Romans, which continued for wellnigh four centuries. During this period no fewer than five Roman Emperors visited the island in person, viz. Claudius, Hadrian, Severus, Constantius, and Constantine the Great ; and the influence of other Emperors was exerted through their representatives in Britain. Many famous Roman generals were also engaged in the conquest of the island.

The outstanding events of the conquest may be briefly summarised thus : (1) The Roman general, Aulus Plautius, reduced the south of the island to subjection. Under him

served Vespasian, afterwards Emperor. (2) Ostorius Scapula defeated Caractacus (or Caradoc), King of the Silures, and sent him, together with his wife and family, as prisoner to Rome in A.D. 51. His courage in the presence of the Emperor, however, procured pardon for himself and his followers. (3) The Iceni, under their queen Boadicea, revolted in A.D. 61 and massacred many Romans. In A.D. 62, however, the Iceni were defeated by Suetonius Paulinus, who, in the same year, had destroyed the Druidical stronghold of Mona (Anglesey). It is said that Boadicea poisoned herself after the defeat of her troops. Many of the defeated Britons were sent to Rome, where they were cruelly done to death in combats in the arena. (4) In A.D. 78, Julius Agricola was appointed Governor of Britain. Under three successive Emperors, Agricola continued his work in Britain for a period of seven years. His object was not only to conquer the natives of the island, but to civilise them ; and, in this endeavour, he met with great success. He invaded both Wales and Caledonia. Before proceeding north, however, he assured himself that the country to his rear was at peace. Under his guidance a chain of forts was constructed between the Firths of Forth and Clyde (A.D. 81) in order to hold in check the wild tribes of the north. His fleet, which made the circuit of Britain, sailed even as far north as the Orkneys. An account of this wise and successful general was written by his son-in-law, the great Latin writer, Tacitus. Although the whole island had not been reduced to subjection when Agricola was recalled to Rome in A.D. 85, sufficient progress had been made to enable the Romans to continue the many improvements already commenced in Britain.

8. During the Roman occupation of Britain many first-rate roads were constructed. The earliest of these were intended for the rapid transit of troops : hence the shortest **Roman** route from camp to camp was followed. It is **Roads.** probable that they were constructed at first with the greatest possible despatch, and completed in more settled times. Although they were not originally intended to serve any

commercial purpose, they were ultimately of immense benefit to trade. Winding native tracks were also improved under Roman guidance. Considerable doubt exists as to the actual direction of the famous Roman roads, the chief of which were : (1) Watling Street, from the coast of Kent, *via* London, probably to the Scottish border ; (2) Icknield Street, from the Norfolk coast south-west to Southampton or Dorchester ; (3) Ermine Street, from London to Lincoln ; (4) Foss Way, from Cornwall to Lincoln.

9. At convenient intervals along the great highways military garrisons or camps were established, usually at points com-

Roman Camps. paratively easy of defence. Many of these camps developed into towns ; and, in order to render them still more secure, some of them (*e.g.* York, Chester, Lincoln) were surrounded with massive walls. It should not be thought, however, that all cities thus strengthened owe their origin to the Romans. Many towns existed prior to the Roman occupation ; but their importance, strength, and size increased under Roman rule.

10. In addition to the walls erected for the defence of military camps, the Romans were compelled to construct

Roman Walls. special lines of garrisons across the country. The violent attacks of northern tribes led to the abandonment of the forts built under Agricola's rule. In A.D. 121, the Emperor Hadrian's wall (a series of strong forts) was built from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway Firth. Eighteen years later, Antoninus Pius, who afterwards became Emperor, strengthened Agricola's works by an earthen rampart extending from the Forth to the Clyde. But the tribes north of the Forth continued to give trouble. The Emperor Severus, who himself visited Britain in A.D. 208, replaced Hadrian's earthen wall by one of solid masonry, eighteen feet high and from six to ten feet thick, extending north of Hadrian's Wall from Wallsend, near Newcastle, to Carlisle. The line was further strengthened by the addition of a ditch thirty-six feet wide and fifteen feet deep. Twenty-three towns or forti-fied ' stations ' were constructed at intervals along the wall,

whilst numerous square-built towers and bastions were also erected.

11. During the third and fourth centuries, Roman Britain was subjected to invasions from both the east and the west. The western shores of the island were assailed by **Coast** the Scots from Ireland. A special officer, known **Defences.** as the ' Duke of the Britains,' was appointed to take charge of the defence of the western coast. The south and south-east shores of the island were also raided by Saxon rovers from north-west Germany. Nine coast fortresses were set up, accordingly, between the Wash and Southampton Water. These were manned by special garrisons in charge of an officer styled the ' Count of the Saxon Shore,' that is, the shore raided by Saxon sea-rovers. These defensive measures at first met with some degree of success ; but, in A.D. 367, both the ' Duke of the Britains ' and the ' Count of the Saxon Shore ' fell before the wild onslaughts of the Celtic and Teutonic invaders.

12. Rome was in urgent need of revenue : hence taxes were levied with little regard to the welfare of the subject people. A property tax (*tributum*) was imposed upon all **Taxation in** capable of yielding revenue. As the island was **Roman** rich in corn, large quantities of grain were exported **Britain.** for the provisioning of Roman troops. Import duties (*portoria*) were also levied on imported goods.

13. The Roman government of Britain, after the island had been reduced to subjection, was calculated to preserve peace and order. Risings of a minor character occurred **Roman** from time to time, but no serious disturbance took **Government** place. The Britons, however, were treated as a **in Britain.** conquered people : hence they seldom occupied positions of importance. For this reason they were totally unprepared for self-defence or self-government when the Romans suddenly quitted Britain in A.D. 410.

It should be noted, however, that the Britons were not treated as slaves by their Roman conquerors. The Emperor Caracalla, in A.D. 212, even bestowed upon all free-born Britons the privileges of Roman citizenship. Service (of about twenty-

five years) in the Roman Army was similarly rewarded.   But
the independence of the Britons had been destroyed.

14. During the fourth century, the heart of the Roman
Empire was assailed by powerful enemies from other parts of

Recall of   Europe : hence many Roman troops were with-
the Roman   drawn from Britain for the defence of the home-
Legions.   land.   Britain, the Roman province, was also
raided by the Scots from Ireland and the wild Picts from the
north of the island.   But Rome herself was in dire straits.
In 410, therefore, the Emperor Honorius announced that the
Britons must defend themselves against their enemies.   The
Roman legions were withdrawn, and Britain thus ceased to
form part of the once mighty Roman Empire.

15. Britain is specially rich in Roman remains, a study of
which supplies reliable information concerning the manner of

Traces of   life of her Roman conquerors.   Students of the
Roman   subject must rely rather upon the spade than the
Occupation.   book.   Roman remains may be briefly classified
thus : (1) Portions of roads, walls, camps, villas, temples,
tombs, baths, etc. ; (2) Mosaic pavement, pottery, and other
ornaments ; (3) Tools, *e.g.* hammers, axes, chisels, trowels,
anvils, etc. ; (4) Weapons, coins, etc.   The south of Britain is
peculiarly fortunate in having a plentiful supply of such
material proofs of the Roman occupation.

The Romans also left clear signs of their influence upon
the very language itself: *e.g.* ' castra ' (a fortified camp), in
such names as Lancaster ; ' colonia ' (a colony), in Lincoln ;
' portus ' (a harbour), in Portsmouth ; ' strata ' (a paved way),
in Street ; ' fossa ' (a trench or ditch), in Fossway, Finsbury,
etc. ; and ' vallum ' (a rampart), in Wallbury (Essex).

Anglo-Saxon Times (A.D. 449 to 1066)

16. After the departure of the Roman legions, the system
of government by tribal kings speedily re-established itself.
By degrees, also, quarrels between tribe and tribe became
more numerous and violent, as first one and then another

petty king sought to assert authority over neighbouring tribes. In the meantime, the wild Picts and Scots renewed their attacks. British chiefs, therefore, appealed to **The Coming** Rome, in 446, for assistance against their enemies. **of the** But the ' Groans of the Britons,' as the appeal **English.** was called, met with no response from the Romans, who were fully occupied with their own troubles. The Britons accordingly imitated the Roman custom of relying upon foreign troops for assistance : so they called in the help of their old foes, the sea-rovers of north-west Germany. This led to the inrush of successive bands of invaders, who finally made themselves masters of Britain.

17. In 449, the British chief, Vortigern, sought the assistance of the Jutes from northern Denmark in his attempt to drive back the Picts and Scots. As a reward for their **The** services, Vortigern bestowed upon them the Isle **Conquerors.** of Thanet. Other bands of Jutes crossed over to Britain in order to secure a share in the new land. They were followed by tribes of Saxons and Angles. The former had occupied that part of the European coast which stretches from the Rhine to the Elbe ; whilst the latter had dwelt in the south of Jutland (*i.e.* between the Saxons and the Jutes), in a district since known as Schleswig-Holstein. These three Teutonic tribes (the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes) made Britain their home, and succeeded in overpowering the native Britons. The very name England, that is, the land of the Angles, is proof of the power wielded by that invading tribe.

18. The English conquest of Britain differed widely from the Roman. Angles, Saxons, and Jutes did not arrive **Character of** in one vast horde. As already indicated, various **the Conquest.** bands came over independently and at intervals, and gradually established themselves in the island. They were the more eager to adopt such a course because their native territory was being overrun by Asiatic barbarians. The newcomers differed widely from the native Britons—in appearance, manner of life, language, etc. Unaccustomed to town-life, they desired to live mainly by means of tillage.

In order to achieve their purpose, they ruthlessly slaughtered the native Britons who opposed them : they destroyed many of the fortified camps established during the Roman occupation : roads and towns were neglected : Christianity, which had made some little progress in the island, was stamped out : some few of the native Britons were reduced to slavery : others, who escaped slaughter, were driven west into Cornwall, Wales, and Cumberland. Many of the invaders took wives from among the captive women. This union of Celtic and Teutonic blood probably accounts both for the marked differences apparent between the English and German stock and for the number of Celtic words in our language. The English conquest has been aptly described as one of ' sheer dispossession and slaughter of the people.'

19. By degrees, the Teutonic invaders conquered the whole country and established small kingdoms which, however, were **The** independent of each other. Within a century and **Heptarchy.** a half of the first inrush, seven of these states appear to have made themselves paramount in the land. Under their leader, Hengist, the Jutes founded the kingdom of Kent about the middle of the fifth century. Three settlements are definitely assigned to the Saxons, viz. : (1) South Saxony, which included Sussex and part of Surrey ; (2) West Saxony or Wessex, embracing Hants, Dorset, Berks, and Wilts ; (3) East Saxony, extending over Essex, Middlesex. and part of Herts. For the remaining four kingdoms, the Angles were responsible. These included (1) East Anglia, consisting of North Folk or Norfolk, South Folk or Suffolk, together with portions of Cambridge and Bedfordshire ; (2) Mercia, embracing the Midlands from the Thames to the Humber, and from the Severn to Bedfordshire ; (3) Bernicia, from the Tees to the Forth ; (4) Deira, including Yorkshire, Lancashire, Durham, and Westmoreland. The two last-named subsequently became the kingdom of Northumbria. These seven kingdoms have been described as the Heptarchy. It is important to bear in mind, however, that other less prominent kingdoms existed.

20. The religion of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes resembled that of other branches of the Teutonic family, who were all pagans. Of their numerous gods, seven are of interest to us because from them are derived the **Religion.** names of the days of the week. Sunday was the Sun's day, and Monday the Moon's day. From their war-god, Tiw, is derived the name Tuesday. The fourth and fifth days of the week are named respectively after Odin, or Woden, the Giver of Victory, and Thor, the God of Thunder. Friday is named after the goddess Friege, the wife of Woden. Little is known concerning the god Soetere, whose name survives in the word Saturday ; but it is probable that the name is a corruption of ' Saturn's day.' Our pagan forefathers believed that after death they would live again in Walhalla, where the days would be spent in fighting and the nights in feasting.

21. Although, prior to the coming of the English, Christianity was not unknown in Britain, it had not taken any deep root : hence the pagan invaders were uninfluenced **Conversion** by it during the early years of the conquest. It **of the** is recorded that Britain was the only country **English.** (that had once formed part of the Roman Empire) where the Teutonic invaders had succeeded in stamping out Christianity. But Pope Gregory the Great was desirous of extending his missionary efforts to the English. In 596, therefore, he arranged that Augustine, together with about forty monks, should undertake the task. A year later, Augustine and his band landed in Kent. Ethelbert, King of Kent, had married a Christian princess ; and, at her request, Augustine was received in audience by the King. The Christian missionary delivered his message to the King and courtiers in the open air. In the same year (597) Ethelbert was baptized into the Christian Church by Augustine, who was himself consecrated the first Archbishop of Canterbury. Numbers of the English followed Ethelbert's example, so that the new religion spread rapidly. It is said that within a hundred years of the landing of Augustine, the whole of England had adopted Christianity. St. Patrick in Ireland, and St. Columba in Scotland, had sown the

seeds of the Christian religion prior to the landing of Augustine in England.   More than half of England, it is said, owes its conversion to influences other than that of Roman missionaries. During the seventh century, monasteries or abbeys began to spring up in different parts of Britain.   Of the good work effected by these institutions we shall read in subsequent pages.

22. The spread of Christianity did not bring peace to Britain. Kingdom continued to wage war against kingdom ; and first 'First King one and then another petty king made himself of the more powerful than his neighbours.   Early in the English.' ninth century, Egbert, King of Wessex, became so powerful that he was in reality ' First King of the English,' although he was not so styled.   For nine years (827 to 836) he was lord of the greater part of Britain.

23. But early English kings were not left in undisputed possession of their territory.   As early as the eighth century, Danish bands of Norsemen or Danes began to ravage the Invasions. seas and coasts of Western Europe.   These people were known as ' vikings,' a word meaning ' creekers ' or ' men of the bays or fiords,' from the Icelandic *vik* or *wik* (a bay) and *ing* (belonging to).   They were of the same stock as the English, and spoke a similar language : for this reason they hated the English all the more for having adopted Christianity as their religion.   Their first recorded landing in Britain was at Dorchester in 787.   Wherever they landed they carried fire and sword into the surrounding district, taking a wanton delight in destroying what they could not carry away.   Men, women, and even children were ruthlessly butchered ; churches and monasteries were destroyed ; then they decamped with their plunder of captives, cattle, and jewels.

About the middle of the ninth century, the Danes began to settle in England.   Alfred the Great (871 to 901) made definite efforts to drive them away ; but at last he was obliged to make a compromise with them.   By the Treaty of Wedmore it was agreed that (*a*) Alfred should rule over Wessex, Sussex, Kent, and Mercia ; (*b*) Guthrum and his followers should become

Christians and rule over the remainder of England. This district, subject to Danish laws and customs, was known as the Danelagh.

But trouble from the Danes was not at an end. For some years after the death of Alfred the Great, succeeding English kings contrived to hold them at bay. Towards the end of the tenth century, however, Ethelred the Unready attempted to rid himself of Danish attacks by bestowing large sums of money upon the invaders, the amounts being raised by means of a tax known as Danegeld (*i.e.* Dane-money). Naturally, other bands of Danes raided England in order to enrich themselves. Thus it happened that from 1016 to 1042 three Danish kings succeeded each other upon the English throne.

24. By intermarriage, by the adoption of Christianity, and by persistent settlement in England, the invading Danes, ere the close of the eleventh century, **Traces of** became almost completely merged with the con- **Danish** quered people. Proofs of their settlement are **Settlement.** still to be found, especially in the names of places : thus, the Danish ' by,' *a town*, exists in such names as Whitby (White town), Grimsby (Grim's town), etc. There are in England over six hundred settlements with names ending in *-by*. Of these, two hundred are in Lincolnshire, and one hundred and fifty in Yorkshire. Only one is found south of the Thames. ' Fell,' *a bare rock hill*, remains in Crossfell, Scawfell, etc. ; ' gill,' *a ravine* with a small gravelly stream, in Ormesgill ; ' force,' *a waterfall*, in Scale Force ; ' tarn,' *a mountain lake*, in Flat Tarn ; ' thorpe,' *a village*, in Bishopthorpe, etc. The fact that these places are mostly in the north-east proves that Danish influence was strongest in those districts.

25. During the earlier years of the Saxon period, little progress was made in the arts of peace. The struggle for mastery between native Briton and invading **The Arts of** Teuton resulted in the temporary decline of **Peace.** agriculture and manufacture. After the re-introduction of Christianity, however, the country became more settled. Priest and monk did not confine their whole attention to the teaching

of the Gospel : they were also skilled handicraftsmen. For this reason the work of the weaver, carpenter, shoemaker, miller, mason, dyer, and smith, was evident both within and without monastic institutions. Every dwelling contained a loom, and even ladies of rank devoted much attention to the production of fine embroideries destined to become famous throughout Europe. But industry was not confined entirely to the home. Fishing and salt-making received special attention. Agriculture, however, was the chief occupation of the mass of the people. It was conducted on a simple co-operative system which became more fully established as the manorial system under the Normans. Crops of cereals (wheat, rye, oats, and barley) were raised ; apples, pears, and other fruits were produced ; herds of swine populated the forests ; bee-keeping was common. Oxen and sheep were bred in considerable numbers ; but, root crops being unknown, they were mostly killed in the autumn and their flesh salted.

But, although our Teutonic ancestors were noted sea-rovers, the early history of England is almost a blank as regards commerce. After taking possession of Britain, the invading tribes forsook the sea : hence commerce received little or no attention until King Alfred had overcome the opposition of the Danes. Under his guidance, however, the first native English fleet was built ; an undertaking that has earned for King Alfred the title of ' Founder of the British navy.' This attempt at guarding the coasts led to the construction of vessels for commercial enterprises ; and some Englishmen became traders and merchants. Traders from France and other countries of Europe visited our shores. Cargoes of wine, cloth of gold, gloves, vinegar, spices, precious metals, gems, ivories, and valuable furs were imported. In exchange for these commodities, England offered cattle, horses, minerals, and even slaves. The traffic in slaves was considerable, the supply being furnished by captives taken in war, and by those unfortunate ones reduced to slavery through crime or debt. Although a coinage system was in operation, bartering was still practised.

To the Anglo-Saxons we also owe the framework of our language. From them, too, we have inherited the first native writings of Early English, both verse and prose. The earliest English literature is poetry ; and the first English poet whose works have been handed down to us was Caedmon. Near the abbey of Whitby, towards the end of the seventh century, Caedmon worked as a cowherd. It is recorded that as the result of a vision he was inspired to sing of the ' Creation of the World.' For the first Saxon prose writings we are indebted to the venerable Bede, a learned monk of Jarrow. His writings were, for the most part, in Latin, but he wrote an English translation of St. John's Gospel. King Alfred, however, was responsible for starting the most important Old English prose-writing— the ' Saxon Chronicle.'

26. One of the most important features of the Anglo-Saxon system was the marked distinction between one social grade and another. There were slaves in those days : **Social** hence the most important division of society was **Grades.** that which distinguished between the free and the unfree. But this was by no means the only classification. Both the free and the unfree were further divided into several classes. The two most important classes of freemen were the ' eorls ' or nobles and the ' ceorls ' (churls). In early Saxon days, the eorls were the nobility, that is, the great landed proprietors. At a later date, a new type of nobility came into being, viz. the thegn (thane). It became customary for the eorl to be surrounded by a band of attendants little inferior in social status to himself. These men were fed and lodged by the eorl to whom they were attached. They were, in fact, his comrades or ' servants ' (for such is the meaning of the word ' thegn ') ; and he was their lord, or ' loaf-giver.' There were even two classes of thegns, viz. king's thegns and lesser thegns. King's thegns were required to possess at least forty hides of land, a hide ranging between sixty and one hundred acres. Lesser thegns were to possess at least five hides of land. Ceorls were the most numerous of the freemen. They were either artisans or cultivators of the soil, for themselves or the lords whom

they served.　It was possible, however, for a ceorl to become a noble.　If his family possessed five hides of land for three generations, or if he succeeded in crossing the sea three times in any commercial enterprise undertaken at his own risk, he might be elevated to the rank of thegn.　As a rule, a ceorl held land of some lord, in return for which he was required to render definite service.　When the land passed to any other owner, the ceorl also passed to the new lord.　In this way he was a kind of territorial serf.　At the bottom of the social scale were the slaves, of whom there were three classes, viz. theowes, esnes, and thralls.　The theowes were probably descendants either of the native British, or of the slaves brought over by the Anglo-Saxon invaders.　Esnes were a superior class of slave who worked for hire.　Prisoners taken in war, and freemen reduced to slavery on account of debt or crime, constituted the class known as thralls.　There was, however, no caste system : thus any freeman might rise in the social scale, and even a slave might become free at the will of his owner.

27. The home-life of the Saxons was not nearly so crude as has been supposed.　For the most part, their dwellings were **Saxon** one-roomed wooden structures, in the middle of **Dwellings.** which a fire was lighted.　Chimneys being then unknown, a hole in the tapering roof served the double purpose of admitting air and dispersing the smoke from the fire.　But although the dwellings were of such rude construction, they were made as comfortable as possible.　Hangings served both as adornment and as protection against draught.　Bed-curtains and sheets are mentioned in Anglo-Saxon wills.　Much of the furniture, though simple, was constructed of costly materials ; and dishes of gold and cups of silver were common in the homes of the wealthy.　The dwellings of the humbler classes were then, as now, mere huts ; and the rush-covered floor usually served as a bed, whilst the skins of fur-bearing animals provided warm covering.

28. Much attention was devoted to personal adornment, especially by the wealthier classes.　Gaily-coloured garments

of silk, wool, or linen, were worn by both sexes. Numerous
ornaments of precious metals, studded with gems, were also
favoured both by men and women. Shoes were **Personal**
worn by all, and varied with rank. Rough gar- **Adornment.**
ments of skin were worn by slaves, while the close-fitting
smock-frock was the usual dress of the humbler freeman. But
the distinguishing feature of the Saxon was the manner of
dressing the hair. Saxon men prided themselves on their
forked beards, whilst the women of the period delighted in
flowing hair and ringlets.

29. In Anglo-Saxon times the King was assisted in the work
of government by the Witan or Witenagemot. This was the
supreme council of the realm, and was constituted **The Witen-**
of the King, his wife and sons, and the chief nobles **agemot.**
of the land, including archbishops, bishops, earls, abbots, and
king's thanes ; *i.e.* of the ' wise men ' of the kingdom. It is
thus evident that the Witan was neither a representative nor
a large assembly. Apparently, all freemen were entitled to
attend the meetings of the Witan. For various reasons, how-
ever, this right was not generally used : hence the largest
number recorded as having been present at any meeting is 106.
On great occasions, however, such as a coronation or threatened
invasion, an immense concourse of people would assemble and
would applaud or dissent from the proposals of the nobles.
The Witan usually met at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas ;
though it might be convened at other times if deemed necessary.
Its meetings were held wherever the King and his court happened
to be, *e.g.* Westminster, York, Gloucester. This circumstance
accounts in a great measure for the meagre attendance, travel
being difficult. The powers of the Witan were great. It could
elect the King from the royal kin, and depose him for mis-
government : grants of royal land were subject to its consent:
it was the supreme court of justice : it could make laws,
declare war, assent to treaties, levy taxes, appoint and remove
important officers of state, and exercise considerable control
over the ' Fyrd,' or national militia ; constituted of all the
freemen of the kingdom. But these extensive powers were

not generally wielded ; for, as the authority of the King increased, that of the Witan diminished.

30. The Witenagemot was not concerned with the details of government affecting the smaller areas. From the very **Courts of** earliest times, the people of each locality appear **Justice.** to have enjoyed the right of self-government. For the settlement of local disputes, therefore, as well as for the trial of offenders, various courts of justice were established. These varied in importance with the area controlled. Of least importance was the *Town Moot* or *Hall Moot,* so called because it was sometimes held in the hall of the chief local magnate. Its jurisdiction extended only over the township or small settlement originally surrounded by a ' tun ' or quickset hedge. Disputes and offences of a trivial nature were dealt with by this court, which met monthly. All freemen residing within the township might act as members of the Town Moot, which was responsible for the making of local laws and for the election of local officers (*e.g.* the town reeve and the beadle).

Of greater importance was the *Hundred Moot.* It is uncertain whether the term denoted one hundred hides of land or one hundred free families. The court met monthly and was presided over by the ' Hundred-elder ' or ' Hundred-man.' It was constituted of the reeve, four representatives from each township, the priest of each parish, and the landowner of the area. Offences too serious to be dealt with by the Hall Moot were brought before this court.

Next above the Hundred Moot was the *Shire Moot* or *Folk Moot.* All freemen were entitled to attend its meetings, which were held twice a year, under the bishop of the diocese, assisted by the ealdorman (an officer appointed by the Witan). A special officer (the sheriff or ' shire-reeve ') was appointed by the King to see that the decrees of the Shire Moot were executed. This court was second only to the Witenagemot itself.

31. The penalties inflicted by the courts varied with the nature of the offence. In early Saxon days all crimes might be atoned for by the payment of fines. This payment for ' damages ' was known as ' wer-gild,' *i.e.* ' man-gold.' At a

later date, some few offences (*e.g.* murder, treason, witch-craft) were punishable only by the banishment or execution of the criminal. The fine or ' wer ' was exacted **Legal** not from the wrong-doer himself, but from his **Penalties.** kindred. In this way, the community was held responsible for the misdeeds of its members. The amount of the fine varied with the social rank of the person injured. Neither was it paid over to the victim. Half the sum was paid to the family of the injured person, and half to the King. The former portion was known as ' wer,' the latter, as ' wite.' When the injured person happened to be a slave, the ' wer ' was paid to his owner by way of compensation for the damage done to his property. Punishments other than fines and the death penalty included outlawry and slavery. If a person were outlawed he was no longer protected by the law and might be hunted and slain. In important trials a jury of freeholders was employed, ' sworn to do justice.'

32. During the Roman occupation of Britain, substantial structures of stone and brick were erected. Many British masons had been trained to assist in this work : **Anglo-Saxon** hence they were capable of imitating the work **Architecture.** done by their Roman conquerors. In Anglo-Saxon times, however, many of these Roman edifices were allowed to decay and some were demolished. After the reintroduction of Christianity many churches were built of wood. It appears that these wooden structures were merely temporary expedients in most cases, to be replaced by more durable ones in more prosperous times. The church of St. Peter at York was originally of wood ; but, at a later date, ' a larger and nobler church of stone ' was erected. Numbers of churches were destroyed by the Danes in the ninth century ; but Canute, the first Danish King of England, rebuilt some of them. It is estimated that there were about fifteen hundred churches in England immediately before the Norman Conquest. Of these, about seventy still exhibit specimens of Saxon architecture.

Buildings erected between the early seventh century and 1066 are usually described as Anglo-Saxon in style ; but the

term is not really a satisfactory one. A more appropriate description would be ' Pre-Conquest.' Anglo-Saxon architects were not, in reality, responsible for the progress made in architecture during the period. Much of the work was carried out under the supervision of Roman missionaries and their followers, and may, therefore, be more faithfully described as a variety of Italian art.

The main features of the so-called Anglo-Saxon style may be thus summarised : (1) great height compared with length and breadth of building ; (2) square, rectangular, or cruciform in plan ; (3) massive square towers with tapering roofs ; (4) semi-circular arches with little adornment ; (5) semi-circular or triangular window heads ; (6) absence of aisles or transepts : (7) frequent use of fragments of Roman mouldings, brick, etc.

33. In 1042, Danish kings ceased to rule in England ; and Edward the Confessor, the first sovereign of the later Saxon **Battle of** period, ascended the throne. During his reign of **Senlac.** twenty-four years, Norman influence was strong in the country. Edward himself had been educated in Normandy, his mother's native land. Two opposing parties (Norman and English) were accordingly evident in the land : otherwise, the reign was uneventful.

On 5th January 1066, Edward the Confessor died. The heir to the throne was Edgar the Atheling, a youth completely unsuited to the task of government : hence the Confessor on his deathbed recommended his brother-in-law, Earl Harold, as his successor. Harold was, therefore, chosen King by the Witan within a month of the death of Edward the Confessor. In order to distinguish him from the Danish King of the same name, he is known as Harold II. For nine months there ruled in England the only Englishman, not of royal blood, who ever sat on the throne.

In the meantime, another competitor for the Crown appeared in the person of William, Duke of Normandy. His claim was based on three grounds, not one of which was valid : (1) that the late King had promised that William should succeed him ; (2) an oath said to have been extorted from Harold that he

would support the claim of the Norman duke; (3) relationship of William to the Saxon King—William's mother being descended from Alfred the Great.

On 14th October 1066, the dispute was decided at Senlac, near Hastings. The battle raged from 9 A.M. until nightfall, when the Norman duke gained a decisive victory. Harold having been slain, Edgar, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, was chosen King by the Witan; but, on the approach of the Norman army on London, Edgar himself offered the Crown to William. On Christmas Day 1066, the Conqueror was crowned in Westminster Abbey by Archbishop Eldred. Thus ended the Anglo-Saxon line.

The Norman Period (1066 to 1154)

34. Although William had been elected King of England by the Witan and had been crowned, he was by no means master of the whole country. The greater part **Completion** of England had still to be won. Fortunately **of the** for him, the unconquered districts could not **Conquest.** combine : hence the country was subdued piecemeal. Risings of the English took place in various parts ; but, by means of vigorous campaigns, first one and then another district fell to the new King. The whole area between the Humber and the Tees was laid waste with fire and sword in order to terrify the rebels ; and for more than fifty years this district remained deserted and barren. In 1070, the last attempt at resistance broke out. This was headed by a Lincolnshire nobleman named Hereward the Wake (*i.e.* Watchful), who made his stronghold in the Isle of Ely, where he was surrounded by bog and fen. After a year's warfare, Ely was taken by the Conqueror, and the land was at peace.

35. The Bayeux Tapestry is a band of linen about 230 feet long and 20 inches wide. It is preserved under glass at Bayeux, a little town in Normandy. From it may be de- **The Bayeux** rived much valuable information concerning the **Tapestry.** Normans and the English at the time of the Conquest. On it

are represented 1512 objects, including people, animals, build-
ings, boats, and trees.   These have been worked with a needle
in worsteds of eight colours : hence it is not really ' tapestry.'
Although the work has been attributed to Matilda, the wife
of the Conqueror, it was more probably executed at the request
of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, for his cathedral, where it was
formerly used on special feast-days to decorate the nave of
the sacred edifice.   The ' tapestry,' which is now light brown
with age, is divided into seventy-two scenes, beginning with
Harold's visit to Bosham on his way to Normandy, and ending
with the flight of the English at Senlac.   Others depict Harold's
capture by William, his taking the oath of allegiance to the
Norman duke, his return to England, the funeral of the Con-
fessor, the coronation of Harold, the preparations made in
Normandy for the invasion of England, the crossing of the
English Channel, the landing in England, the battle of Senlac,
and the death of Harold.   At South Kensington is preserved
a coloured photograph of the ' tapestry,' made for English
Education Authorities in 1871-2.

36. William was a conqueror.   He had won the land
with his sword : hence he claimed that he was sole owner.
The Feudal   Some of the English landholders were allowed
System.   to remain on their estates.   Others, however,
who had fought against him at Hastings, were deprived
of their lands, which were granted to his Norman followers.
The land thus granted was called a feud or fief.   It was,
however, not given outright.   Certain conditions were imposed,
the chief of which was the rendering of *homage*.   This was
an impressive ceremony, in which the recipient declared
himself to be the lord's ' man ' ; the word *homage* is derived
from the Latin *homo*, man.   He was required to kneel bare-
headed before the King, place his hands between those of his
royal master, and swear to serve him only.   All who received
estates directly from the King in this way were known as
tenants-in-chief, or vassals ; and this manner of granting an
estate was known as the feudal system.

Vassals of the King sublet portions of their estates, upon

similar conditions of service, to tenants known as mesne tenants. Both tenants-in-chief and mesne tenants were entitled to the protection of their respective overlords. The chief duty of each tenant was to provide a certain number of men to fight for his lord in time of need—the larger the fief, the greater the number of soldiers to be provided.

This system of land-tenure was common, prior to 1066, not only in England, but on the continent of Europe. But it possessed definite drawbacks. Mesne tenants were bound to their immediate overlords only. Moreover, they could not be required to follow him ' beyond the seas ' : hence the Norman Duke William experienced considerable difficulty in collecting his army for the invasion of England. The greater vassals, too, were able to mobilise forces so formidable as to threaten the authority of the King himself. It is evident, therefore, that some reorganisation of the feudal system was necessary.

37. William I., taught by experience in Normandy, sought to increase his authority in England by putting restraints and limitations on the power of the nobles. In Nor- **Feudalism** mandy and other countries, mesne tenants had to **under the** follow their overlords in battle, even against the **Conqueror.** King. To prevent this, the Conqueror compelled every holder of land, whether tenant-in-chief or sub-tenant, to take the oath of allegiance to him. A great meeting of landholders was called together on Salisbury Plain ; and there all were made to do homage to the King. The sub-tenant was thus obliged to follow the King, and not his lord, if his lord should quarrel with the King. It was this obligation which distinguished the system adopted by the Conqueror from that in vogue on the Continent. William also provided that the lands granted to each great baron should be in different parts of the country, instead of being in one large estate. Thus it became difficult for any baron who might rebel against the King to gather his followers together.

38. Personal service was not the only condition attaching to the feudal system. It was also necessary to provide for the raising of revenue. This was done by exacting certain sums

known as feudal dues, the chief of which may be briefly described thus: (1) *Relief*, a fine payable by the eldest living son (or daughter) on succeeding to an estate rendered vacant by death ; (2) *Primer seisin*, an additional relief paid by the heir on the death of a tenant-in-chief; the sum paid to the King being equivalent to a year's profits of the estate ; (3) *Fine*, sum payable for permission to transfer any part of the estate by will. Upon certain conditions the estate reverted to the lord : (1) *Forfeiture*, when the vassal failed to perform his feudal duties ; (2) *Escheat*, when the vassal died without heirs, or was convicted of treason or felony. Feudal lords, especially at a later date, sometimes received a money fine, called *scutage*, in lieu of military service.

Feudal Dues.

39. Certain *aids*, or sums of money, were also paid to the lord upon special occasions. These contributions were due (1) when the lord's eldest son came of age and was made a knight, (2) as a dowry for his eldest daughter when she married, and (3) as a ransom when the lord was taken prisoner.

. **Feudal Aids.**

The feudal lord also exercised two other important rights (viz. *wardship* and *marriage*) which became most burdensome to the tenant. By means of the former, he assumed control over both the person and the estate of a minor, and restored the lands to him (on his coming of age), without accounting for the mesne profits. When the ward was a female, the lord not only chose a husband for her, but demanded a sum of money if she declined to marry as directed.

40. Thus far, no reference has been made to the effect produced by the feudal system upon the masses of the country —the real cultivators of the soil. In early Saxon days, the dwellers in the ' townships ' possessed considerable freedom. They cultivated the soil on a simple co-operative system. But as the power of the King increased and a military class came into existence, the lot of the peasant population became less happy. Under Norman administration, even the name of the little settlement was changed. Henceforth it was known as a *manor*, that is, a ' dwelling-

The Manor.

place.' Many such settlements existed, the head of each being known as ' the lord of the manor.'

Each manor contained a number of tenants who held land of the lord. Some of the tenants were freemen ; others were unfree. The former class was not large in number, except in parts of the north-east of England. To them, larger ' grants ' were made than to their unfree brethren. Rent was paid in military service, or in produce, or in labour, or in money. Moreover, the free tenants were at liberty to leave one manor and settle in another. But the main body of the tenants were unfree. This does not mean that they were slaves ; but they were bondsmen. They could not sell their land. They could not leave the manor without their lord's permission. They could not even ' sell an ox or give their daughters in marriage ' without consulting their masters. Thus they may be described as territorial serfs. In order to ensure the proper performance of duties, officials were appointed by the lord of the manor.

Besides the houses of the lord and his tenants, each manor usually contained a church, a mill, and sometimes a market. The manor generally consisted of three parts—arable or ploughed land, meadow, and waste. Arable land was generally worked on what is known as the three-field system, *i.e.* it was divided into three fields, usually of considerable size. Strips of grass served to mark out the three divisions of the ploughed land ; for the enclosing of land by hedge or wall had not then become customary. On one field wheat was sown ; on another, barley or oats or beans ; the third lay fallow. Every year a change in the crop was made, so that each field would lie fallow for one year in every three. Each field under crop was divided into strips an acre or half an acre in extent. These were divided amongst the inhabitants of the manor in proportion to their social status.

Each manor was self-supporting. Within its limits, every-thing necessary for the little community was produced. Imple-ments, both for field and home use, were largely home made. Cloth was woven in the cottages, where also ale was brewed and bread was baked. This was the more necessary because

of the deplorable state of the roads, which rendered communication between one manor and another extremely difficult.

41. The feudal system, as established by the Conqueror, resulted in important changes which affected both King and **Results of** people. These may be summarised thus : (1) The **the Feudal** King became the great landowner: hence absolute **System.** ownership of land (*i.e.* allodialism) was abolished, and the power of the Crown was increased enormously as compared with that of Saxon times. (2) Military service became the fixed duty of every landholder, and it was thus possible to organise a great army. England thereby became a defensive state, at the head of which was the King, the supreme military authority. But William I. abolished the great and compact earldoms, and thus made it impossible for any baron to defy the Crown successfully. (3) A tremendous change came over society. The old aristocracy was reduced to secondary rank by the new nobility composed of the conquering Normans. All grades of society, however, possessed some real status in the land ; for, on the manor or estate, the feeding, lodging, and clothing of the people took place. It thus became evident that a strong form of government was the best for all. The Norman civilisation was indeed superior to that which it supplanted.

42. The feudal system was not without defects. For more than two centuries, however, it continued to operate in England **Decay of the** after its reorganisation by the Conqueror. But **Feudal** important changes gradually occurred in the con- **System.** dition of the people ; and, in course of time, the system fell into decay. Among the causes contributing to this result may be included : (1) fusion of Norman and Saxon people ; (2) England's entry into foreign warfare ; (3) growth of foreign trade, notably in wool ; (4) increasing use of money, and its consequent acceptance in lieu of service ; (5) lack of discipline caused by unsuccessful wars ; (6) plague and its consequent creation of a shortage of labour ; (7) changes in the methods of agriculture ; (8) general progress in knowledge and civilisation. To the feudal system, however, we owe the

founding of the modern landed aristocracy ; for, although the fiefs were granted in the first place to the vassal for life only, they became by custom hereditary.

43. During the earlier years of the Conqueror's rule, his Norman subjects paid no taxes at all. But his demands were heavy, and could not be met by the native English. **Domesday** Moreover, an attempted invasion from Denmark **Book (1086).** rendered desirable an estimate of the national resources, both military and fiscal : hence, in 1083, the King decided that a tax of ' six silver shillings per hide of land ' should be exacted from the whole kingdom. This tax, which was known as Danegeld, did not yield nearly as much as the King expected, because the Norman lords evaded payment as far as possible.

With the view of reducing evasion to a minimum, the King ordered a complete survey of every manor in the kingdom to be made. As the work was accomplished within the brief period of about nine months, it is obvious that a large number of officials must have been engaged in it, and that the country was divided up for the purpose into comparatively small areas. Every manor was visited ; every landholder was carefully questioned about the size of his estate, the kind of land, the number of mines, fisheries, mills, ploughs, and animals. The information thus collected was set down in the wonderful *Domesday Book.* ' There was not even an ox or cow or swine that was not there set down,' says the Saxon Chronicler. *Domesday Book* is in two volumes, which may still be seen at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane. The parchment shows little evidence of decay, and the writing is still perfectly clear. It is not easy to read, however, for it is written in Latin, and many of the words are abbreviated, like most of the writings of that period.

44. A direct outcome of the Domesday Survey was an enormous increase in the wealth of the Crown. This was an important factor in the growth of kingly **The** power under the Norman administration. After **Kingship.** William I. had reduced the country to submission, the form of government appeared to differ little from that of Edward the

Confessor. At first there was a change of name only—the Witan of Anglo-Saxon times being styled the *Great Council* by the Normans. But, although the Great Council resembled the Witan in form, its powers were reduced to a mere shadow. The Conqueror had become supreme landholder ; and the combining of manors into groups, and these again into still larger groups, with the King as chief, brought about a strong system of national government. Norman kings were, in reality, despots : hence the assent of the Great Council to legislation and taxation was merely formal.

Under Henry I., the third Norman sovereign, the complexion of even the Great Council itself was changed. As it met so seldom, a kind of committee was set up to advise the King upon matters of state. Over this committee the King presided in person. He was assisted by specially appointed officers, usually nobles of high rank. Because the Committee was thus attached to the King's person, it became known as the *Curia Regis*, *i.e.* the King's Court. Its powers were extremely wide —executive, legislative, and judicial ; and to it were referred appeals from inferior courts of justice.

It is evident, therefore, that a strong system of central government was an outstanding feature of Norman rule. In this, however, the King played a prominent part ; for, although the royal decisions, in theory, received the consent of the Great Council of the realm, they were, in fact, the direct outcome of sovereign power. The circumstances contributing to this exercise of the royal prerogative will be the better understood after a review of the powers conferred upon local courts in Norman times.

45. A noteworthy feature of Anglo-Saxon government was the strength and importance of the local courts of justice. Local Ad-   Under the Norman administration, as we have ministration. already seen, the power centred upon the King and his officers. But the local courts were allowed to survive ; for, by means of them, the Norman sovereign was enabled to hold in check the proud barons who sought to make themselves all-powerful in the land. In this endeavour, the King received

the whole-hearted support of his English subjects, who had suffered severely from the oppression of the Norman nobles. Thus, by making themselves absolute rulers, the Norman kings secured the goodwill of the humbler people. The barons were unable to administer their own local law, for the royal power overshadowed the jurisdiction of even the minor courts.

Four of these institutions are worthy of attention, viz. : (1) The *County Court*, which corresponded with the Shire Moot of Anglo-Saxon days. It was presided over by the sheriff, or his deputy, who was assisted, as judge, by the landholders or freemen of the county ; *i.e.* all over fifteen years of age. In practice, however, the ' shout of one freeman ' could not be distinguished from that of another : moreover, many freemen, being more interested in haymaking or other home duties, failed to attend the meetings of the court. The custom, accordingly, arose of requiring every ' township ' or manor to send its reeve and at least four other men as representatives. The County Court had unlimited jurisdiction over ' life, limb, and property.' (2) The *Hundred Court*, which was older than the County Court, was presided over by the bailiff of the hundred. Like the County Court, it met monthly. (3) The *Manor Court*, or *Court Baron*, the oldest form of local government, consisted of all the men of the manor, both free and unfree, and they were fined for non-attendance. Manor rolls contain instances of fines imposed for absence even on days when no cases were down for trial. The Manor Steward, who presided, gave sentence in accordance with the judgment of the court, which had full criminal and civil jurisdiction. (4) *Forest Courts*, presided over by the warden and foresters. Their purpose was to enforce the harsh forest laws ordained by the Norman sovereigns for the preservation of game for their own hunting. The New Forest in Hampshire, a famous royal hunting ground, still retains much of its old wildness.

46. William I. was determined to exercise control over every department of state. The powerful barons were ever ready to increase their own authority at the expense of that of the Crown. It was necessary, therefore, for the King to

utilise all means of holding them in check. Accordingly, the Conqueror set about the reform of the Church with the view **Canon Law** of increasing its power. Numerous abbeys were **Established.** already in existence. These possessed estates which had been bestowed upon them by kings and nobles in Anglo-Saxon days. Attached to each abbey was a retinue of workers and dependants, for these religious houses were self-supporting. They were, in fact, busy hives of industry. Over each was an abbot who was in reality the lord of the monastic estate. The Conqueror realised that the influence of the Church might be made a source of strength to the royal authority. Numerous other abbeys were accordingly founded, and existing ones were reformed upon Norman lines. Moreover, foreign monks were invited to fill the highest offices in the English Church. In 1070, Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, was deposed ; and Lanfranc, an Italian monk who was abbot of Bec, was appointed in his stead. The aims of Lanfranc coincided with those of the King. Hitherto, it had been customary for defaulting clergy to be tried in the ordinary law-courts. Both King and archbishop, however, regarded such men as too holy to be brought before the County Court or other local tribunal. In 1086, therefore, special courts were established for the trial of offending clergy. Such courts were in existence on the Continent, where the bishop dealt with all offenders against the Church in accordance with *Canon Law.*

By the establishment of ecclesiastical courts, the affairs of Church and State were separated—an arrangement that was destined to bring the two parties into conflict with each other. Many serious quarrels ensued, the first of which occurred in the reign of William ii., the Red King. On the death of Lanfranc in 1089, King Rufus failed to appoint a successor for four years. During this period, the King claimed the revenue of the vacant *see.* A Norman abbot, named Anselm, was then appointed. But, although Anselm was mild in disposition, he was determined to resist whatever he thought unfair. He believed it was wrong for the King to keep certain benefices vacant in order that he might enjoy the profits

derived from them. The King and Anselm quarrelled, and the archbishop went abroad, where he remained until the death of Rufus. When Henry I. came to the throne, Anselm returned, and continued to uphold the rights of the Church.

47. Although the Norman sovereigns wielded immense power, it was necessary for them to conciliate their English subjects in order to ensure their support against the unruly Norman barons. The descent of the Crown was not strictly hereditary. William the Conqueror was succeeded, not by his eldest son, but by his favourite son, William, nicknamed Rufus. But the Norman barons in England would have preferred the easy-going Robert, the Conqueror's eldest son, as King : hence a rebellion in his favour took place. With the aid of the English, Rufus succeeded in quelling the rising ; and, by way of reward, he made lavish promises to his English subjects. These, however, he failed to make good.

Charter of Henry I.

In 1100, Rufus was killed while hunting in the New Forest. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Henry, surnamed Beauclerc because of his learning. Another attempt was made to secure the English crown for Robert of Normandy, who was on his way back from the first crusade. Henry, having seized the royal treasures at Winchester, immediately set about making his position secure. His aim was to ensure the support of his English subjects. This he sought to do by marrying Edith (or Matilda) of Scotland, by recalling the exiled Archbishop Anselm, and by issuing a Charter of Liberties. By means of the last-named Henry sought to conciliate all classes of his subjects, Norman and English alike. Its chief contents may be thus summarised : the King promised (1) to refrain from appropriating or interfering in any way with church revenues during the vacancy of any see or abbey ; (2) not to extort money unlawfully from the vassals of the Crown and their sub-tenants ; (3) that the laws in force in the reign of Edward the Confessor should be restored ; (4) that the Curfew Bell and Danegeld should be abolished.

It will be seen that Henry I., by means of the Charter of

Liberties, made concessions in favour of the Church, the vassals, and the nation as a whole. But he did not completely achieve his purpose. The Norman barons were indignant at Henry's marriage with a Scottish princess ; and his subjects in general were dissatisfied because the harsh forest laws of the Normans were retained.

48. It speedily became evident that the Curia Regis, established by Henry I., would need reorganisation. Ultimately, **The** the court was subjected to a threefold division, the **Exchequer** first step being taken during the reign of its **Founded.** founder. The clerks of the Royal Chapel were formed into a body of secretaries and royal ministers, whose chief bore the title of Chancellor. Their work was both to assess and to collect the revenue. The sum thus collected was paid, at prescribed intervals, into the royal treasury. A chequered table or cloth, much like a chessboard, was used for balancing the accounts ; and, to this day, such a cloth may be seen upon the table in the room of the Court of Exchequer. Disputes respecting payment to the Crown were settled by a body of barons from the Court of Exchequer. These Barons of the Exchequer, as they were called, visited shire by shire, just as our Assize Judges do to-day. The financial business of this ancient court is now transacted by the Bank of England, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer is still responsible to Parliament for its proper management.

To Henry I. is really due, therefore, the honour of having founded the Exchequer. The Curia Regis was further subdivided in the reign of John, when the Court of Common Pleas was established ; and again under Edward I., when the Court of King's Bench was first organised.

49. Law and order are conducive to social progress. Such was the result of the Conquest. As the Norman government became more firmly established, the energies of the people were no longer expended in fruitless quarrels. English traders were brought into closer connection with the Continent. This was especially the case with France and Flanders, for Norman

kings exercised considerable influence over the territory on each side of the English Channel. Many foreign artisans were encouraged to settle in England, where their skill **Settlements** was appreciated by the Norman nobles. Two **of Flemings** such settlements are worthy of special mention. **and**

Early in the twelfth century, parts of Flanders **Cistercians.** were devastated by heavy floods. A colony of homeless Flemings, in 1105, accordingly sought protection in England. They were allowed to settle in Pembrokeshire, where their descendants may still be found. About a quarter of a century later, Cistercian monks from the north of France began to settle in various parts of England.

As already indicated, the whole time of the monks was not devoted to religious observances. The members of the Cistercian Order were particularly industrious, and devoted their energies largely to the breeding of sheep and the reclaiming of waste land. The Flemings were specially interested in the finer arts of wool-weaving : hence the two settlements were of distinct benefit to English trade.

From the very outset of the Norman rule in England, commerce had received encouragement. The Conqueror ordered all ports and roads to be opened to merchants free of toll. British ships were employed to convey to England the products of France, Spain, and Italy. All who robbed or molested traders were severely punished.

During the reign of Henry I. (1100 to 1135), Normans and English intermarried more frequently. This blending of native English with Norman conquerors gave a further impetus to the arts of peace, and ' a new race ' of people arose who began to grow rich by trade. In course of time many towns were able to purchase the much-coveted charters which freed them from the irksome control of the great lords.

50. The Normans were most enthusiastic builders : hence the erection or rebuilding of monasteries, cathedrals, parish churches, castles, and even dwelling-houses en- **Norman** gaged their attention. Numerous examples of **Architecture.** their skill and energy still survive in England, although many

additions and alterations have been made during the succeeding ages.

Of the numerous castles built by the Normans, the White Tower, in the Tower of London, is perhaps most worthy of mention. It was built during the reign of the Conqueror, in accordance with the design of Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, the great architect of the time. At first the White Tower was the whole Tower of London ; but, in course of time, it has been made stronger by the addition of smaller towers, strong walls, and a ditch or moat outside the walls. Such structures were erected by the Conqueror in order to overawe his English subjects. Other castles were built during the reigns of Henry I. and Stephen. The latter King was weak, and was openly defied by the barons, who built castles in which they lived as robber chieftains. Norman kings had often to besiege many of these castles.

Numerous cathedrals and parish churches in England still bear testimony to the skill and industry of Norman architects. In course of time, however, many additions, alterations, and repairs have been effected ; but the distinctive Norman style is still apparent to all interested in the subject. It is worthy of note that the Normans did not confine their attention solely to the large castles and cathedrals : many tiny village churches bear proofs of their handiwork. On the coast of Dorset, between Bournemouth and Swanage, is the hamlet of Studland with its Norman church, the chancel arch of which has been an object of admiration to thousands of lovers of architecture.

Solidity and strength were the chief features of Norman architecture ; but the durability of the structures was often more apparent than real. Massive-looking pillars and walls were frequently filled in with less-durable material. The mortar used by the Normans was also inferior to that employed by Saxon architects. For this reason, many of the earlier Norman towers and churches soon fell into decay, a fact which accounts for the vast amount of rebuilding in later Norman days. Openings were few and as small as possible : hence the windows of the Early Norman Period were long, narrow, and round-

headed. Norman arches were almost exclusively semi-circular ; but, during the Later Norman Period, they were sometimes pointed. An excellent example of the Norman semi-circular type of arch is furnished by the exquisite cluster of such arches in the north transept of Romsey Abbey, in Hampshire.

51. One most important (and lasting) effect of the Norman Conquest was the introduction of a large number of Norman-French words into the English language. Thousands **Norman-** of Normans, of all social grades, were resident **French.** side by side with the native English during the Norman Period. Thus Norman-French was the language heard wherever Normans congregated. It is even recorded that no English king, from 1066 to the middle of the fourteenth century, did or could speak English. French was spoken not only at court but by the clergy, lawyers, and great landholders. In spite of this, however, the English tongue was not supplanted. It continued to be spoken by the greater number of the people, especially by the poorer classes ; and, in course of time, it was gradually adopted even by the Normans themselves.

But many Norman-French words found their way into our language. Most of these relate to feudalism, law, the chase, war, the Church, cookery, and titles. It is interesting to note that the live animals in the fields, under the charge of the Saxons, retained their Saxon names, *e.g.* ox, cow, steer, sheep, calf, swine, deer, and fowl. When the flesh of the animal appeared on the table of the Norman lord, the Norman name was given to it, *e.g.* beef, mutton, veal, pork, venison, sausage, and pullet. Moreover, the names of implements and kitchen utensils retained their Saxon names. This is a pretty clear indication that most of the labourers, servants, and workmen were of the Anglo-Saxon race.

52. When Henry I. died in 1135, a dispute arose with regard to a successor. Two claimants appeared, namely, **End of** Matilda (Empress Maud), daughter of Henry I., **Norman** and Stephen, Count of Blois, grandson of the **Rule.** Conqueror and nephew of Henry I. The barons objected to

feminine rule and hated Matilda, a woman of strong will. They preferred Stephen, who was frank and generous, but too easy-going for such times.

The country became divided, and anarchy ensued.   David I., King of Scotland, invaded England in support of his niece, Matilda, but was defeated at the battle of the Standard, near Northallerton.   Both Stephen and Matilda employed mercenary troops, principally from Flanders.   During this state of anarchy, which lasted nineteen years, the great barons erected numerous castles in many parts of England.   Some pretended to assist Matilda ;   others to favour Stephen's claim.   In reality they aimed only at becoming independent.

Throughout this unfortunate struggle, the mass of the people of England were made utterly wretched.   The barons ill-treated and robbed them ;   law and right were defied.

At last, in 1153, the opposing parties came to terms.   By the Treaty of Wallingford it was arranged that the son of Matilda should be regarded as heir to the Crown, but that Stephen should reign for life.   In the following year Stephen died.

The Plantagenet Period (1154 to 1399)

53. The new King, Henry II., was one of the strongest rulers England ever had.   With him began a new line of kings called **Order** by some the Plantagenets, by others the Angevins. **Restored.**   The former name was given because Henry's father, wore a sprig of broom (*planta genista*) as his device ; the latter, because he was descended from the Counts of Anjou.

Henry II. was a strongly-built man, and so energetic that he rarely sat down except to meals.   Moreover, he was possessed of considerable business ability and statesmanship.   The foreign troops introduced by Stephen were expelled from the country ;   and the rebel barons were forced to destroy the castles erected during the anarchy of Stephen's reign.

It thus happened that the Normans began to make common

cause with the native Saxons. They had resided in England long enough to be desirous of remaining : hence a fusion of the two races occurred. To this circumstance is largely due the triumph of the English language over the Norman tongue.

54. Henry II. was frequently absent from England because of his extensive domains on the Continent. From his father he had inherited Anjou and Touraine ; from his **Henry II.'s** mother and grandfather (Henry I.), Normandy, **Dominions.** Maine, and England ; through his wife, Eleanor (divorced from Louis VII. of France), he obtained seven important provinces in France. Through his son, Geoffrey, he also ruled Brittany. The whole of his vast territory Henry ruled with firmness and vigour.

55. Although Henry II. had caused nearly four hundred castles of the unruly barons to be levelled to the ground, he desired to diminish the baronial power still **Scutage.** further. In 1159, therefore, he offered to excuse the feudal barons from fighting under his banner if they would pay him certain sums of money. This tax was called scutage or shield-money. It was 'a money payment of £3 made upon every knight's *fee* or *fief* in England.' Most of the barons gladly agreed to pay this tax. The chief result was that the feudal lords, in time, lost the fighting habit, and so became less of a menace to the King. Henry used the money thus provided to hire foreign soldiers to fight for him in his French dominions. The power of the sovereign was thereby enhanced, for he was no longer dependent upon the feudal service which had been confined to forty days. To the smaller landholders, the change was a distinct boon ; for they were no longer compelled to forsake their estates at busy times of harvest in response to the call of the overlord. Scutage inflicted a tremendous blow upon the authority of the great barons, who were thus left with fewer armed men at their service.

56. It was also the desire of Henry II. to reduce the power of the clergy. He saw that the Church was wealthy in both money and lands, and that it exercised great influence over

the people. In some respects it resembled a foreign power
over which the King had little control. Henry, therefore,
Consti-   appointed one of his courtiers, Thomas Becket,
tutions of   as Archbishop of Canterbury. Becket had held
Clarendon   the office of chancellor, had led a luxurious
(1164).   life as a courtier, and had advised the King
upon the chief affairs of State. But when he became arch-
bishop he changed his manner of life. He fed and clothed
himself as a monk, and he defended the rights of the Church.
Henry and Becket quarrelled ; so the archbishop left the
country and remained in exile for six years. Immediately
after Becket had left the kingdom, Henry called a meeting of
the Great Council at Clarendon, near Salisbury, in 1164. There
were drawn up the famous Constitutions of Clarendon. Of the
sixteen provisions contained therein, the following are the chief :
(1) ' Criminous clerks ' (*i.e.* clergy accused of crime) should
be tried in the ordinary courts of the realm ; (2) the King should
be supreme in ecclesiastical and spiritual matters ; (3) clergy
holding lands of the Crown should render homage for them ;
(4) no ecclesiastical person should quit the kingdom without
the King's consent ; (5) the revenues of vacant sees should
be paid to the King, whose consent should be required to
all appointments of successors to the vacant bishoprics.

In 1170, Becket returned to England. His conduct again
angered the King, who was at his court in Normandy. Henry's
words caused four of his knights to hurry over to Canterbury,
where they murdered the archbishop in his own cathedral.
Both King and people were shocked when they heard of this
crime ; and Becket came to be regarded as a saint as well as
a martyr—St. Thomas of Canterbury. The quarrel between
the King and Becket is an important historical event. It
marks the attempt of Henry II. to make himself absolute
master in the kingdom—supreme over clergy, nobles, and
people.

57. Having attacked the power both of the barons and of
the clergy, Henry II. next attempted to set right the adminis-
tration of justice. In the time of Henry I. the custom had

arisen of sending justices about the country to try cases. Their chief duty was to collect the revenue, and to determine disputes connected with the payment thereof. **Judges of** Moreover, they had no fixed circuits. Formerly, **Assize.** these duties had been performed entirely by the King in person; but the practice occasioned much delay. Henry II. accordingly resolved that definite districts or circuits should be assigned to the justices. To each of these circuits (six in number) three itinerant or travelling justices were appointed. From place to place within their own circuits these judges journeyed to try civil and criminal causes at what are now called assizes, *i.e.* sittings. To Henry II. it was thus due that fixed circuits were allotted, and the law of the land again won the respect of the people. It should not be thought, however, that Judges of Assize have sat regularly since the time of Henry II. Assize courts were not firmly and regularly established until 1285, in the reign of Edward I.

Henry II. has been described as the founder of English justice because of the many legal reforms effected during his reign. Many of the laws or statutes passed in those days were known as *assizes*, *e.g.* the Assize of Arms (1181) enacted that every knight and every burgess should provide themselves with suitable armour for use in time of war. To-day, however, the word *assizes* is almost exclusively used to mean the ' sittings of the judges.'

58. For hundreds of years it had been the custom for Christian pilgrims to go yearly to Jerusalem, to visit the many places in that city sacred to the memory of the life of **The** Jesus Christ. In 1076, however, the Turks in- **Crusades.** vaded Palestine and captured Jerusalem. The Turks were Mohammedans; so they tortured Christian pilgrims in order to make them change their religion. Some of the pilgrims escaped from Palestine and brought back to Europe accounts of the cruel treatment. One of these was a French monk named Peter the Hermit. Urban II., who had succeeded Gregory, was Pope at that time. He heard with sorrow of the state of Jerusalem; so he appealed to the clergy, nobles, and

all the Christian people of Europe to join together for the rescue of the Holy Grave. Three hundred thousand people pressed forward to enlist for the Crusade, *i.e.* the War of the Cross. As a sign of their holy cause, the Crusaders wore a cross on their breasts when they started out, and on their backs when they returned. Thus began the First Crusade (1095).

In July 1099, Jerusalem was taken by the Christians. A terrible slaughter of the infidels followed, Christian men believing that they were rendering service to God by butchering the Mohammedan heathen. It is said that, in some places, the Christians waded in blood ; but beside the Holy Sepulchre they knelt in prayer. Other Crusades followed, and in 1187 Jerusalem was retaken by Saladin, the Mohammedan leader. Most famous of all the Crusades was the third, which commenced in 1189. In this, Richard i., the lion-hearted King of England, took part. He had succeeded his father, Henry ii., on the throne. Like all the other Crusades, the third was doomed to failure. Moreover, Richard was anxious to return home because of the troubles which had arisen in England. It was during his journey homeward that he was taken prisoner by Leopold, Duke of Austria, with whom he had quarrelled in the Holy Land. Leopold handed him over to the Emperor of Germany, by whom he was kept in prison until a heavy ransom had been paid.

59. The increase of English trade led to the growth of towns which were, at first, under the rule of some great baron, bishop, **Town** or even the King himself. Each town had to pay **Charters.** rent, or give military service to the lord of the manor. In course of time, however, kings and barons often consented to give up their claim to tax the inhabitants of these towns. Whenever this was done, the King or baron granted to the citizens a writing called a charter. This document stated that the inhabitants were free to govern themselves. Towns that obtained these privileges were called 'free boroughs' ; and the freemen residing therein were known as 'burgesses.' It is important to bear in mind,

however, that not all residents were freemen. The rights of citizenship belonged only to those who fulfilled certain conditions : *e.g.* were the sons of freemen, or owned property within the borough, or had rendered notable service to the town. From the last-named, the modern practice of conferring the ' freedom of the city ' or borough upon distinguished persons took its rise. In return for the right of self-government, the burgess paid to the overlord a large sum of money. It was, therefore, a question of purchasing freedom. Annual payment was replaced by a lump sum. Kings and nobles in need of money were willing to grant charters. The citizens, on their part, were equally desirous of managing their own affairs and of freeing themselves from the payment of tolls which they regarded as unjust. Numerous opportunities for the granting of town-charters were afforded by the Crusades, upon which the nobles expended immense sums. Between 1096 and 1270, no fewer than seven of these ' Holy Wars ' were entered upon. Consequently, by the middle of the twelfth century, the movement towards the self-government of towns had become common.

60. Whilst the towns were struggling for self-government an incident occurred which was to prove of permanent benefit to the nation as a whole, namely, the restriction **Magna** of royal power. In 1199, Richard of the Lion- **Charta** heart was succeeded by his youngest brother, **(1215).** John. The new King was possessed of considerable ability, but he was extremely unwise. As we have already seen, the Conqueror and his successors had gradually established a system of government calculated to preserve peace and to foster progress. The Government had been strengthened still further by the legal reforms of Henry II. There was, however, a serious flaw in the system, viz. the enormous power wielded by the sovereign. King John proved to be incapable of exercising the royal authority wisely. He aimed at making himself absolute, and stuck at nothing in order to achieve his purpose. His reign of seventeen years was marked by three great quarrels, each of which ended disastrously for John. (1) The struggle

with King Philip of France resulted, in 1204, in the loss to England of Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and a part of Aquitaine. ' Thus, then,' says Bishop Stubbs, ' after a union of a hundred and forty years, Normandy was separated from England.' This was, indeed, humiliating ; but it was not without its compensations. Hitherto, the attention of the Norman barons had been divided between their English and French estates. Henceforth, they were at liberty to devote their whole attention to their English possessions. (2) Three years later, a quarrel arose between John and Pope Innocent III. The Pope appointed a new Archbishop of Canterbury, a wise and learned Englishman, named Stephen Langton. John was desirous of making one of his own favourites archbishop. He, therefore, forbade Langton, who was in Rome at the time, to set foot in England.

With the view of reducing John to submission, the Pope thereupon laid England under an interdict—that is, he forbade the exercise of all religious observances. This, however, was no punishment to the real culprit, John. Its effect was felt only by the nation as a whole, who were not responsible for the King's tyranny. As John still refused to submit, the Pope ordered Philip, King of France, to dethrone John, and make himself King of England.

John was thereby reduced to abject submission. Kneeling humbly before the Pope's messenger, he acknowledged the Pope as his feudal lord. This led to the united opposition of barons, clergy, and people. (3) The King had already offended the barons of England, and had thus entered upon his third great quarrel. Assisted by Langton, therefore, the barons drew up a statement of the rights and liberties of Englishmen. This was presented to the King at Runnymede, on 15th June 1215. There King John reluctantly set his seal to the Great Charter. This important document, a copy of which may be seen in the British Museum, was written in Latin. It did not contain much that was new ; for most of the provisions had already been stated in previous Charters, notably in that of Henry I. Of the sixty three clauses contained therein, the

following are the most important : (1) The Church of England
to be free to manage its own affairs.   (2) No freeman to be
seized, imprisoned, dispossessed of his lands, outlawed, banished,
or damaged in any way, except by the lawful judgment of his
equals in rank or by the law of the land, *i.e.* without a fair
trial.   (3) No new taxes of any kind to be imposed except by
the consent of the Great Council of the realm.   (4) There was
to be one standard of weights and one standard of measures
throughout the kingdom ; and all merchants were to be free
to travel safely for the purposes of commerce without being
made to pay heavy tolls.

61. Within twelve months of setting his seal to the Great
Charter, King John died suddenly of fever.   He was succeeded
by his eldest son as Henry III.   At the time of   **The Mad**
his accession, Henry was a minor : hence two   **Parliament.**
powerful nobles, William Marshal and Hubert de Burgh, were
appointed to act as regents.   In 1227, however, Henry assumed
the reins of government, with disastrous results.   His mis-
government resulted in offending all classes of his subjects.
High positions in the State were showered upon foreigners,
many of whom were relations of his wife.   In this way,
English nobles were offended.   Foreign priests were also
appointed by the Pope to the highest offices in the Church,
and the English clergy were thus debarred from preferment.
Moreover, the whole nation writhed under the excessive
taxation rendered necessary by the King's extravagance.
Discontent was rife among barons, clergy, and people.   Some
there were, however, who supported the King.   The nation
became divided into two parties—the King's Party and the
National Party.   It is remarkable that the leader of the
National Party, Simon de Montfort, was not only a foreigner,
but the brother-in-law of the King, having married the sister
of Henry III.

Failing to persuade the King to govern justly, Simon placed
himself at the head of the discontented barons.   When the
Great Council met at Oxford in 1258, the barons wore com-
plete armour as a precaution against treachery.   For this

reason, the assembly was styled the Mad Parliament. The barons refused to sanction any further taxation until the King's extravagance had been curtailed. They drew up a plan of reform which was presented to Henry for his assent. The chief terms of this document, known as the Provisions of Oxford, provided for : (1) the dismissal of foreign favourites from high offices of State ; (2) the reduction of taxation : (3) the rendering of an account of all public expenditure ; (4) three meetings of Parliament annually, viz. in February, June, and October ; (5) the election of four knights, by the freeholders of each county, to represent them in Parliament ; (6) the appointment of a council of fifteen bishops and barons to represent the King in the administration.

62. For four years the terms of the Provisions of Oxford were adhered to. It was easy, however, for the King to foster **The Barons'** dissension in the special council : consequently, **War.** some of the members forsook the people's cause in order to assist that of the King. Henry then threw over his undertakings. Foreigners flocked back into the country, and taxation again grew burdensome. Then began the Barons' War (1264). It is worthy of note that the two parties, King and barons, had long been struggling for mastery—in fact, since the reign of the tyrant, John. Although some of the barons joined the King, the majority supported Earl Simon. Thousands of Londoners also volunteered for service under the Earl's banner. After many encounters of no great importance, the two forces at last met at Lewes, in Sussex, in May 1264. The royal army was defeated, the King himself was captured, and his son, Prince Edward, surrendered. Earl Simon then took charge of the helm of State, not as King, but in the King's name.

63. In order to appreciate more fully the excellent service rendered to the nation by Simon de Montfort, it will be well **'The First** to review briefly the changes that had taken place **House of** in the system of government since Early Saxon **Commons'** days. It had been the custom, in those early **(1265).** times, to hold assemblies to which the people came to assist the King in making laws and imposing taxes. At

first, all freemen over fifteen years of age were entitled to attend these meetings ; but when the smaller kingdoms became united into larger ones, it was impossible for all to be present. By degrees, the government drifted into the hands of a few—chiefly barons and great Church dignitaries. Thus laws were frequently made without the assistance of the ordinary common people, who, by their non-attendance, forfeited important privileges. The Witenagemot and the Great Council, in practice, came to consist of nobles and churchmen only.

About 1250, however, the meetings of the King and his council began to be known as Parliaments. Earl Simon saw that the old system was unfair. He believed that all classes should be consulted when laws were made.

But, although the ' commons ' of the realm realised that an improvement in the manner of government was essential, they were not eager to take any part in it. They regarded such duties as irksome, and were ready to shirk them if possible. But the work of the preaching friars resulted in arousing the people to a sense of their responsibilities. So, when Simon de Montfort called his Parliament, he summoned not only barons and clergy, but merchants and tradespeople. The sheriffs were instructed to return two knights from each shire, two citizens from each city, and two burgesses from each of twenty-one specified towns. Only those boroughs which were on the side of de Montfort were invited to send representatives : hence the assembly of 1265 did not form our first Parliament as we now understand it. To make a complete Parliament, persons chosen from all ranks and from all parts of the country by the people themselves must be present. Such an assembly did not meet until thirty years later, when the Model Parliament of 1295 consisted of ' a full and perfect representation ' of barons, clergy, and commons. But the Parliament of 1265 is usually described as ' The First House of Commons,' because it included, for the first time, ' commoners,' that is, people who are not of noble rank.

64. At Westminster, there are now two Houses of Parliament —the House of Lords and the House of Commons. But all

the members of the Model Parliament (1295), barons, clergy, and commons, formed one assembly representing the ' three **Two Houses** estates of the realm.' It will be of interest to **of Parlia-** consider briefly (1) why the three estates did not **ment.** continue to form one ' house,' and (2) why they became divided into ' two houses ' instead of three. The change was not effected suddenly. No revolution occurred. It was a gradual development. In those days, the whole work of Parliament was the consideration of matters of taxation. Prior to 1295, the representatives of the clergy had begun the formation of two special assemblies of their own, viz. the Convocations of Canterbury and York. Edward I., however, invited them to send representatives to the Model Parliament : consequently, they were fully represented in that assembly. But they preferred to vote their taxes in Convocation : hence they soon ceased to be represented in the national assembly. As the interests of the commons differed widely from those of the barons, it soon became the practice for the two sections to discuss their business apart, although at first in the same room. Then occurred the most important change, viz. the use of separate meeting-places, the Chapter House, Westminster, being the place selected by the commons. Although the exact date of this separation into two houses is not known, the change was effected before the middle of the fourteenth century. Members of the House of Lords were summoned to Parliament by special writ from the King. Bishops, being great landholders, as well as barons, were summoned to the Upper House. By 1430, it had been definitely settled that only ' freeholders of forty shillings a year and upwards ' might vote in the election of members of the House of Commons. The franchise was not secured for the ordinary artisan until the nineteenth century.

65. The troubled reign of Henry III. came to an end in 1272, seven years after the meeting of Simon de Montfort's **Conquest of** Parliament. During the following reign, that of **Wales.** Edward I., many useful reforms were effected, including the convening of the Model Parliament (1295), the first Parliament which was representative in any true sense.

But Edward I. was not satisfied to introduce peaceful measures only. He was determined to reduce both Wales and Scotland to submission. A brief review of the chief events connected with these two countries will prove interesting.

The people of Wales are the descendants of the native Celts whom the Romans found in Britain in 55 B.C. To this day the Celts retain their own language. It is still spoken in Wales, in Ireland, and in the Highlands of Scotland. By the Anglo-Saxons the Celts were regarded as *foreigners*, for such is the meaning of the name *Welsh*. But these freedom-loving people delight in describing themselves as *Cymry*, a word meaning *brothers*; the country itself being frequently alluded to as *Cymru*. The brave Welsh were not easily subdued by the English. So frequent were their incursions that special means of defence had to be adopted. Offa, King of Mercia, caused a defensive rampart to be constructed from the Severn to the Dee (778). This is known as Offa's Dyke, whilst the borderland on each side is called ' the Welsh Marches,' *i.e.* boundary or border. Thus Offa, King of Mercia, aimed at defining the limits of Wales.

For centuries, however, these daring Welsh folk defied all attempts made by the English to conquer them. They were frequently defeated in battle, and their chiefs were made to do homage to the English sovereign ; but the mountainous nature of the country made all invasions extremely difficult.

There still remained one independent kingdom in Wales, namely, that of Gwynedd in the north. Henry II. thrice attempted to reduce Gwynedd to subjection ; but his efforts met with little success. The unsettled state of England during the reigns of Richard I. and John led to an increase in the power of the Welsh princes. Of these, Llewellyn the Great was in many respects the most powerful. Although he had married Joan, the daughter of King John, he allied himself with the barons who were opposing the English King. His claim to rank as head of the Welsh people was still further strengthened by King John's acknowledgment of his rights in the Great Charter. Henry III., however, reopened the quarrel by con-

ferring upon his son, afterwards Edward I., all the Crown lands in Wales.

This act roused the anger of Llewellyn (grandson of Llewellyn the Great), who joined the barons under Simon de Montfort against Henry III. Llewellyn had married Eleanor, the daughter of Simon de Montfort ; but, after the defeat of the English barons at Evesham, he was compelled to acknowledge the supremacy of Prince Edward.

When Edward I. ascended the throne in 1272, he realised that the English barons would never be reduced to submission until he had crushed their supporters, the Welsh. Llewellyn, known in Wales as Lord of Snowdon and Prince of Wales, refused to come to England to do homage to Edward. The English King therefore sent to Gascony (his domain in southern France) for troops accustomed to wage war in that mountainous region. With their aid, Edward gradually overcame the opposition of the Welsh. For six years the struggle continued ; but after Llewellyn had been slain, in 1282, the whole of Wales became subject to Edward. In 1284, Edward called together the Welsh chiefs at Rhuddlan, a few miles from the watering-place of Rhyl. There was passed the Statute of Rhuddlan, which decreed that Wales henceforth should be subject to English rule.

As far as possible, however, Welsh law and Welsh customs were retained. English law was gradually introduced, and the country was divided into shires and hundreds. ' The annexation of Wales,' says Bishop Stubbs, ' contributed on the whole to increase the royal power, the personal influence of the sovereign, and the peace of the kingdom. Yet Edward, although he introduced the English shire system into Wales, did not completely incorporate the principality with England.' For two centuries after 1284, anarchy and misrule were rife owing chiefly to the severe rule of the English wardens set over the marches.

66. On 25th April 1284, a son was born to Edward I. at Carnarvon Castle. This young prince, owing to the death of his elder brother, became heir to the throne. Edward sought

to allay any existing discontent among the Welsh chieftains by presenting to them as their prince the royal babe born in Wales. Seventeen years later (1301), the royal First English heir received the title of 'Prince of Wales.' **Prince of** When, on the death of his father, the prince **Wales.** ascended the throne as Edward ii., the people of Wales were delighted that a Welsh prince had at last been crowned in London. Ever since 1301, the title ' Prince of Wales ' has usually been bestowed upon the eldest son of the reigning House.

67. Edward i. was a statesman and lawgiver so great that he has been styled the ' English Justinian,' after the great Roman jurist. It was his aim to establish law **Edward I. as** and order in England rather than to recover the **Lawgiver.** foreign territory lost by his predecessors. With this object in view, he set himself the task of reducing the power of the barons and clergy.

The custom of bestowing lands and other property upon ' religious houses ' had resulted in making the Church enormously rich. As the wealth of the Church increased, that of the Crown diminished ; for Church lands were free from the payment of feudal dues. In 1279, therefore, Edward caused the Statute of Mortmain to be passed. This Act prohibited lands or tenements being made over to monasteries and other religious houses without the consent of the Crown.

By various other measures, Edward i. succeeded in minimising the importance of the great feudal lords, and in establishing feudal levies upon a national basis. Reference has already been made to the meeting (1295) of the first representative National Assembly, the Model Parliament. It was also during this reign that the final separation of the Curia Regis into three courts (Exchequer, King's Bench, and Common Pleas) was effected.

But in order to provide money for the wars in which he engaged, Edward was driven to impose certain taxes without the consent of Parliament. This led to the opposition of the National Assembly which was allayed by the King entering

into an agreement never again to levy taxes without the consent of Parliament. The outcome of this dispute was the signing, in 1297, of the *Confirmatio Cartarum* (the confirmation of the Charters of Henry I. and John), by means of which the power of government remained with King and Parliament, and not with the King alone.

68. It was also the aim of Edward I. to unite England, Wales, and Scotland. For almost a hundred years, England and **Independ-** Scotland had been at peace, although the two **ence of** countries had previously been at enmity for **Scotland.** centuries. The Scots were an Irish people who, during the sixth century, had settled in the west of Scotland. By degrees, they made themselves paramount in North Britain, and finally gave their name to the land.

Having conquered Wales, Edward next turned his attention to Scotland, over which land English kings claimed overlordship. In 1286, Alexander III. of Scotland was killed by falling from his horse over the cliffs. The real and only direct heir to the throne was Alexander's grandchild, Margaret, daughter of Eric, King of Norway. It was arranged that Margaret should be betrothed to Prince Edward of Carnarvon, and thus unite the two Crowns of England and Scotland after the death of Edward I. Four years later (1290), the ' Maid of Norway ' set out for her new kingdom which she was destined never to reach. She died during the voyage, and the Scots were left without a sovereign. Numerous claimants arose for the Crown ; and Edward I., as overlord of Scotland, was invited by the Scottish Council to decide the question.

The number of claimants was first reduced to three, namely, John Baliol (son of the founder of Balliol College, Oxford), Robert Bruce, and John de Hastings. Edward met the Scottish Parliament at Norham, near Berwick, where he decided in favour of Baliol, who, after doing homage to the English King, was crowned at Scone in 1292.

Edward treated Baliol as a mere vassal. He also claimed that all appeals against the decisions in the Scottish law-courts should be made to him. This treatment provoked the

Scots to revolt against Edward and to ally themselves with France. An English army accordingly invaded Scotland, sacked Berwick and Edinburgh, and deposed Baliol, who retired to his Norman estate. The coronation stone (' the Stone of Destiny ') was removed from Scone to Westminster Abbey, where it still remains. It was the firm conviction of the Scots that wherever the stone might be placed, there Scottish kings would reign ; and, in 1603, James Stuart was actually crowned at Westminster as James I. of England.

Naturally the Scots resented the treatment meted out to them by Edward, and sought an opportunity of regaining their independence. When, therefore, William Wallace, a Scottish knight, raised the standard of rebellion in 1297, thousands of his countrymen flocked to his support. Wallace defeated an English army near Stirling, and then proclaimed himself guardian of the kingdom. In the following year, however, Edward led his army in person against Wallace, who was severely defeated at Falkirk. Wallace escaped and remained a fugitive for seven years. He was then betrayed by his servant ; and, after being tried as a traitor, was executed on Tower Hill in August 1305.

A year later, another champion of Scottish independence arose. This was Robert Bruce, grandson of the competitor for the Scottish Crown in 1291. He gathered a large body of adherents and in March 1306 was crowned at Scone. Edward sent an army to Scotland, but was too ill to direct its operations, though he was carried in its wake. At Burgh-on-Sands, however, within sight of Scotland, he breathed his last, July 1307.

Edward I. had almost succeeded in welding England, Wales, and Scotland into one kingdom ; but he died, leaving Scotland still unconquered. His incapable son, who succeeded him as Edward II., failed to carry out the wishes of a dying father. Scotland was left, for three years, undisturbed by England. In the meantime, the forces of Bruce were concentrated : hence, when the English and Scottish armies came face to face at Bannockburn, near Stirling, on 24th June 1314, the English

were completely defeated and Scottish independence was assured.

69. Associated with the reign of Edward I. is the expulsion of the Jews from England. Prior to the Norman Conquest there were few Jews in England ; but numbers of them came over from Rouen, Caen, and other Norman towns immediately after 1066. Their advent into this country was encouraged by the Conqueror, who was quick to realise that they might be the means of replenishing the royal coffers. They had no legal status in England ; they were not allowed to engage in any trade or industry ; they were required to reside in Jewries, that is, certain quarters of towns specially set apart for them. In reality, they were entirely dependent upon the royal favour for protection : hence they were constrained to submit to the King's demands with the best possible grace.

Money-lending was almost the sole occupation of the Jews in those days. In fact, they were the chief capitalists of the times. But, since usury was opposed to Christian teaching, the Jews were despised and hated by the community in general. Nevertheless, they gradually acquired some commercial status : and, on the whole, they were of distinct benefit to trade. Ere the end of the Norman Period, the establishment of a Jewry was an indication of a town's commercial prosperity.

By Richard I. and other monarchs interested in the Crusades, large sums were extorted from the Jews. Henry III., in his fight against the power of the barons, compelled the Jews to provide him with immense sums. This resulted in the massacre of many of these unfortunate people who were detested by the Christian community.

In 1290, Edward I. banished them from the kingdom. This act, however, should not be regarded as due to bigotry, for Edward I. was desirous of ruling justly. His aim was rather to protect the smaller landowners against the wealthier and more powerful barons. From this date, however, Jews were not permitted to reside in England until recalled by Cromwell in the seventeenth century.

70. The effect of the Crusades and the presence of Jewish wealth in the country have been already noted as powerful influences in furthering, respectively, the freedom and the prosperity of towns. There was, however, a still more potent factor in the development and emancipation of towns in the Middle Ages, namely, the gilds.

Gilds.

Various kinds of gilds have existed at different times. The earliest gilds known in England were those of Saxon times. These were largely religious in character. Honesty and fair-dealing in trade were not prominent virtues in those days : hence commercial transactions were only permitted in certain towns and in the presence of some person of approved integrity, such as the priest or the lord of the manor. It is evident, therefore, that the gild was an association specially formed for the protection of its members, all of whom were bound by oath. The membership fees of these organisations were devoted to the assistance of needy brethren, the defraying of funeral expenses, and the holding of feasts at special seasons.

Another form of gild known in Saxon times was the *frith* gild, or gild of peace. This form of gild, however, did not long survive the Norman Conquest. Membership was compulsory ; and the benefits derived were considerable. Not the least of these was the existence of a legal-defence fund, by means of which any member was assured of adequate protection whenever falsely accused or violently attacked.

The most important form of gild was the merchant-gild, which probably was in existence at the time of Edward the Confessor. The name ' merchant ' did not mean, as it does now, wholesale trader. It embraced all who bought materials and worked them up for sale ; thus butchers, bakers, dyers, glovers, tanners, and weavers were all merchants.

With the object of enforcing fair-dealing, each gild adopted definite rules for the transaction of business, and officials were appointed to ensure their observance.

In course of time, the merchant-gilds acquired considerable wealth. Every town possessed a gild-hall, many of which

exist to this day.   It frequently happened, too, that the gild
officials were prominent citizens who thus exercised considerable
influence in the town.   By means of their wealth, the merchant-
gilds were enabled, in many instances, to purchase from King
or baron the charters which bestowed municipal freedom.

As the number of persons engaged in each trade increased,
separate craft-gilds were formed, each of which made regulations
for the management of its own affairs.   Both the merchant-
gilds and the craft-gilds controlled the price and quality of
goods, the conditions under which the goods were made, and
the exact locality where each craft was expected to carry on
business.   Under the influence of the craft-gilds the apprentice-
ship system developed.   But the number of apprentices was
strictly limited, preference being given to the sons of members.

By degrees gild life became extremely rigid.   Only members
of the local gild were permitted to carry on business in a town,
all other craftsmen being regarded as ' strangers ' or ' foreigners.'
Thus the gilds aimed at a trade monopoly in each area.   This
course, however, ultimately led to friction.   The poorer
members began to make common cause with the non-members
in certain districts, and settlements of craftsmen began to be
formed in rural areas.

It is worthy of note that gilds existed not only in England,
but over the whole Continent and parts of the uncivilised
world.   Ere the end of the sixteenth century, however, these
associations were dead or dying in England.   Decaying forms
of the gild still exist in India, China, and other parts of the
East.

In many respects the modern trade unions resemble the old
gilds.   There is, however, one important point of difference :
the latter included both masters and workmen.

71. The protective measures adopted by the gilds were not
conducive to the growth of commerce.   Foreign trade was
Carta   also impeded, from time to time, by international
Mercatoria. quarrels.   One such occurred in 1271 between
England and Flanders, with the result that the importation of
Flemish cloth was forbidden.   In the following year, however,

Edward I. came to the throne, and immediately addressed himself to a settlement of the dispute. Three years later, the same sovereign further restricted foreign trade by announcing (1) that all foreign traders must dispose of their wares within forty days of arrival in the country, and (2) that no alien merchant should reside in England without the King's permission.

It became evident, however, that English commerce would decline unless the restrictions on foreign trade were relaxed. In 1303, therefore, Edward I. caused the *Carta Mercatoria* to be passed. By means of this law, known as the Magna Charta of commerce, it became possible for continental traders to bring their merchandise into England, to reside within the realm even, and to dispose of their wares wholesale. The concession was limited to small wares such as spices and haberdasheries. Foreign merchants were also permitted to carry away any goods, except wines, purchased in England. Special clauses were also inserted in the statute for the protection of alien merchants in England.

Although the Carta Mercatoria met with the violent opposition of the gilds and municipal authorities, it was instrumental in bringing about an extension of England's foreign trade. The gilds were compelled to realise that the interchange of commodities between one country and another is for the benefit of all.

72. To enable townspeople and country people to buy and sell their wares, markets were held in the country towns on certain days in the week. Many of these market-towns exist in agricultural districts to-day. At **Markets.** first, the control of these markets was in the hands of the lord of the manor. Later, they were managed either by the merchant-gild or by the corporation of chartered towns. Special officers were appointed, whose duty it was to ensure that all prices should be at a natural level and that goods should be free from adulteration. The market-place was always some large open space. London had several such spaces, of which the names Cornhill, Cheapside, and the Poultry still remain.

73. In the Middle Ages, few towns contained over five thousand inhabitants. Most of the population resided in villages, and seldom travelled far beyond their own district.

Fairs. Those who did so were regarded with suspicion, unless they happened to be traders. The result was that many goods could not be obtained in the ordinary town market, for there were no large shops. It, therefore, became customary to hold large fairs in various parts of the kingdom. These were held annually, and sometimes lasted for many days. The booths and tents of the merchants were set up in rows, called after the name of the goods sold therein ; *e.g.* ' The Drapery,' ' The Pottery,' ' The Spicery.' It frequently happened, however, that all kinds of trades were represented in one row or street, an example of such being ' Cheapside,' at the Stourbridge Fair. Buyers and sellers were present from all parts of England and the Continent. Fine linens and cloths were brought from Flanders, tar and pitch from Norway, wines from France and Spain, spices and ornaments from the East, lead from Derbyshire, tin from Cornwall, and furs, grain, amber, iron, and copper from the Baltic ports. Every bridge and roadway leading to the fair was carefully guarded in order to secure the tolls which were levied there. All classes of people attended these annual gatherings, from the highest noble and bishop to the poorest peasant. In the midst of the fair was set up a court of justice. It was called the Court of Pie-Powder, *i.e.* the Court of Dusty Feet. Before it were brought each day all who were accused of fraud or brawl. There were also numerous ' side-shows ' which provided ' the fun of the fair.' Of the many fairs held during the year, two are worthy of special mention, viz. those of Winchester and Stourbridge, near Cambridge. That at Winchester was controlled by the bishop of the diocese, upon whom Henry II. had conferred the right by special charter. Stourbridge fair commenced about the end of August, and continued to the end of September. So important was this fixture that it continued down to the eighteenth century in unabated vigour. Though fairs are still

held in many places, they are now almost entirely devoted to ' the fun of the fair ' ; although horse, goose, and cheese fairs are not unknown. Railway, steamship, and telegraph have brought buyer and seller into communication with the most distant portions of the earth ; and the shops of our large towns now supply all local wants.

74. Throughout his reign of twenty years, the second Edward was guilty of neglecting his kingly duties. Taxes were levied contrary to law, a prodigal court led to national **Edward II.** indebtedness, and the encouragement of unworthy **Deposed.** favourites paved the way for tyranny.

Fortunately for the national welfare, Parliament at last determined to depose so unworthy a king. For some time Edward II. was confined in Kenilworth Castle, where he was compelled to sign his abdication. Later in the same year (1327), he was removed to Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire, where he was barbarously murdered.

The deposition of Edward II. was a most important event, constitutionally. It demonstrated that Parliament possesses the power not only to elect a king, but to depose him for gross misgovernment.

75. During the struggle between England and Scotland, the French had frequently assisted the Scots. For many years, however, enmity had existed between England **The** and France because English kings and nobles were **Hundred** required to do homage to the King of France for **Years' War.** their lands in that country. Hostilities at last broke out in the reign of Edward III. ; and, for more than a century (1337 to 1453) a ' state of warfare ' existed between the two countries. It is important to bear in mind, however, that fighting was not going on continuously.

Various causes may be assigned for the outbreak. Edward III. claimed the French throne on the ground of his descent, through his mother, from Philip IV. of France. This claim (as we shall see in the succeeding section) was not valid according to French law. Another cause of friction was the seizure, by French kings, of English territory in France. But the most potent

cause of warfare was trade rivalry. For many years English wool had been exported to Flanders for manufacture. The French King aimed at crippling the Flemish weaving industry in order to impede English commerce. Accordingly, the people of Flanders invited the English to assist them in resisting the tyranny of the French.

It is unnecessary to enter here into the details of the actual conflict. In the pitched battles of the earlier stages of the war, many victories were achieved by the English. This was chiefly owing to the skill of the English long-bowmen, who, at Crecy, Poitiers, and other places, defeated armies vastly superior in numbers. At a later stage, siege operations were adopted. But the artillery of the time was feeble, and the French were comparatively safe within their strongly-walled towns. Thus the war dragged wearily on, relieved from time to time by periods of so-called peace.

The final stage of the war was entered upon early in the fifteenth century. France was, at the time, torn by civil warfare, the outcome of the madness of the King, which paved the way for the entry of two parties—the Burgundians and the Orleanists—each striving for mastery. The English King, Henry v., was an accomplished soldier : hence his entry into the struggle was attended by the notable victory of Agincourt in 1415. This was followed by the alliance of the English with the Burgundians, and the English cause prospered for a time. It was actually agreed that Henry v. should marry a French princess, and thus bring about the union of the English and French crowns. But the premature death of Henry v., at Paris, resulted in the continuation of the struggle. France, however, was destined to be saved. The marvellous work of the peasant maid, Jeanne Darc, as the ' saviour of France,' is well known. Under her banner the people of France became again united. The English were driven from Orleans, and at last the Dauphin was crowned at Rheims.

For another twenty years or more, the war dragged on ; but the English were driven from town after town until only Calais remained in their hands. Thus ended the Hundred

Years' War; and, with it, the English struggle for continental territory.

76. The Salians were a Frankish tribe who, as early as the fifth century, had made a law that the land of the tribe should not descend to females. This rule had really **Salic Law.** nothing to do with the throne of France; for there was, at that time, no French crown in existence. It merely excluded females from inheriting estates in land. Salic *law* was first heard of in the time of Philip the Tall of France, in 1316; but, for more than three centuries, every King of France had been succeeded by his own son. Thus the *custom*, as opposed to *law*, had become established. When, therefore, Edward III. claimed the French throne through his mother, Isabella, the lawyers of France pretended that such inheritance was forbidden by Salic law. There was, moreover, a rightful possessor of the French throne, Philip VI., who was directly descended, through a male, from Philip IV. Hence Edward III.'s claim to the French crown was not valid.

77. Edward, Prince of Wales, was the eldest son of Edward III. When only sixteen years of age, he was allowed to accompany his father to the war in France. On account **The Black** of the dark colour of his armour, he is supposed **Prince.** to have been given the name of the Black Prince. The King was determined that his son should become a warrior worthy of the English crown. He was, therefore, given a responsible position at the battle of Crecy. Although the prince was hard pressed, his father refused to send reinforcements: hence the defeat of the French in this battle brought fame to the young soldier. Among the slain was the old blind King of Bohemia, who fought on the French side. His crest, consisting of three ostrich feathers and the motto *Ich dien* (I serve), was adopted by the Black Prince, and has been worn by every succeeding Prince of Wales. Upon many occasions the Black Prince won renown as a warrior; but, worn out by the hard life of a soldier, he died a year before his father, and was buried in Canterbury Cathedral.

78. An important result of the Hundred Years' War was the reduction of the royal power. During his long reign of fifty **Royal Power** years, Edward III. was constantly demanding **Reduced.** money in order to carry on the war with France. This naturally resulted in increasing the authority of the House of Commons, and three important Parliamentary principles were definitely established, namely : (1) that no taxes may be levied without the consent of Parliament ; (2) that no laws may be introduced without the consent of both Houses of the Legislature ; (3) that public expenditure shall be subject to the consent and control of the House of Commons.

79. The Hundred Years' War had not long been in progress when England was visited by a terrible plague. It made its **The Black** appearance in August 1348, at the little port **Death.** of Melcombe Regis, in Dorsetshire, after having swept westward across Asia and Europe.

The bodies of those attacked by this strange disease were covered with hard, dry swellings like great boils. Dark spots appeared on the skin. Spitting or vomiting of blood followed. Almost every one who contracted the disease died—some in a few hours, others in three or four days. Few recovered. Work was at a standstill. Old and young, rich and poor, weak and strong, alike fell victims. By the end of the year, the greater part of England and Wales had been affected, whilst Scotland and Ireland suffered similarly by the end of 1350.

This dreadful plague, now referred to as the Black Death, was then known as ' The Death ' or ' The Pestilence.' It is recorded that about half the population was carried off by it. There is little doubt, however, that the poorer classes were the chief sufferers because of the greater lack of sanitation in their case. Within about twelve months the epidemic ceased in England. But its consequences were far-reaching, as will be shown in subsequent pages.

80. For about two centuries prior to the Black Death, the position of the labourer had been gradually improving. This was largely due to the increasing use of money, which made

possible the payment of a quit-rent, for land allotted, in lieu
of personal services.   The lord of the manor, accordingly,
began to resemble the modern landlord, that is,   **The Statute**
one who receives rent ; whilst the practice of   **of Labourers**
hiring agricultural labour steadily increased.   **(1351).**

But the Black Death had rendered labour scarce.   Higher
wages, therefore, began to be demanded ; and the prices of
commodities increased.   Labourers wandered from manor to
manor in search of the best-paid work ; for there were not
enough labourers to go round.   On many manors, the crops
were left ungathered, the cattle strayed at will through the
corn, and numbers of sheep and other animals perished from
lack of attention.   It frequently happened, moreover, that
labourers were unwilling to accept the proffered wages and
migrated to the towns where the weaving industry afforded
better terms.   This state of affairs has been described by some
as the Golden Age of the agricultural labourer ; and, by others,
as ' the first great struggle in English history between Capital
and Labour.'

With the object of protecting the landlords and reducing
the labourers to submission, Edward III. caused a law to be
passed, in 1351, known as the Statute of Labourers.   The
statute aimed at compelling all able-bodied labourers under
sixty years of age to work at the rate of payment current in
1342, that is, six years before ' the Death.'   Any labourer
demanding more or any landlord offering higher wages was
liable to punishment—the former to imprisonment, the latter
to heavy fine.   Labourers refusing to work, as well as those
who left their own parishes in search of higher wages, were to
be branded on the forehead with the letter ' F ' so that every
one would know they had proved false.

The statute was a failure.   Between the middle of the four-
teenth and the fifteenth centuries no fewer than fourteen
Statutes of Labourers were passed.   They were applied not
only to agricultural labourers, but to other artisans whose
work was in any way connected with the land.

81. But the cause of the oppressed labourer was not left

without champions.   Both priest and poet came to the rescue.
William Langland, the poet, in *Piers the Plowman*, denounced
John   the landlords because of their harsh treatment of
Wycliffe and the peasants.   The teaching of John Wycliffe, a
his Followers. learned priest, also encouraged the labourers to
rebel.   Wycliffe trained a number of poor priests who travelled
about the country to spread his doctrines.   One of them,
John Ball of Kent, for twenty years stirred up the peasants
against their landlords.

Wycliffe and his followers were called, in derision, Lollards,
a word probably meaning ' vain talkers.'   But their preaching
was not in vain.   They succeeded in combining the peasants,
who determined to get rid of the hated Statute of Labourers.

82. The peasantry of England were seething with discontent.
Only a spark was wanting to set the smouldering fire ablaze.
The   This was supplied by the imposition of a poll-tax
Peasants'   (that is, a tax on every *poll* or head in a household),
Revolt   in 1380, to meet the expenses of the war against
(1381).   France.   The tax was most unjust, the poor man
being required to pay far more in proportion than the rich.
It has been estimated that the twelve pence exacted from the
labourer represented a fortnight's work in those days ; but
the pound required of the very wealthy fell lightly upon their
well-filled coffers.

But although the poll-tax itself was unpopular, the manner
of its collection was frequently still more offensive.   In June
1381, an insolent tax-collector was killed in Kent.   The men
of the county thereupon rose in rebellion, determined to put
an end to the tyranny of the landlords and their agents.   Under
the leadership of Wat Tyler, an ill-armed but desperate army
of peasants was speedily organised.

The rising was not confined to the men of Kent.   All parts
of the country—' north and south, east and west '—were
affected.   ' The unity of the rising,' says Bishop Stubbs, ' was
not produced by unity of purpose; it would seem as if all
who had, or thought they had, any grievance, had banded
together.'   But the aim of the rebels was mainly twofold,

namely : (1) to resist unjust taxation, and (2) the abolition of villeinage.

Having marched upon London, the insurgents sacked the Tower, murdered the Archbishop of Canterbury, and attacked the Temple, the headquarters of the lawyers. Many of the lawyers were burnt or hanged, and the manorial rolls destroyed.

Richard II., the young King, met the rebels and promised to grant their demands. But Parliament caused the King to revoke the promises, and many of the insurgents were afterwards executed. Their leader, Tyler, had already been slain by Sir William Walworth, Lord Mayor of London.

It would appear, therefore, that little had been gained as a result of the insurrection. In reality, however, a mortal blow had been dealt at villeinage.

83. Because of the scarcity of labour, landlords were driven to adopt new methods of farming. For many years there had been an increasing demand for English wool. **Enclosures.** This had been met, to some extent, by the monks and other landholders, who found sheep-breeding a profitable undertaking. The practice now began to commend itself to landlords generally, chiefly because fewer labourers were required than were necessary for corn-growing.

It was essential, however, that the land devoted to sheep-rearing should be enclosed ; otherwise, the sheep would stray across corn-land. But many lords, eager to increase their gains, enclosed not only their own land but also portions of the ' commons.' In this way, the poor were deprived of their right to pasture sheep as had formerly been possible. This injustice did not produce any immediate distress, because of the diminished population resulting from the Black Death, and also because of the migration of labourers to the towns where they secured employment in the weaving industry that was springing up. It is evident, therefore, that prior to the introduction of sheep-farming, landlords were desirous of keeping labourers on their estates, whilst after the enclosing of land commenced they were equally eager to get rid of them in order to make use of the land they vacated. ›

84. Most of the wool produced in England under the new system of farming was exported to Flanders. Because of the **The Woollen** numerous wars waged in northern Europe it was **Trade.** difficult for sheep-farming to be carried on there extensively : hence England was regarded as the chief wool-producing country during the Middle Ages. Flemish workers were, accordingly, dependent upon English wool for their means of livelihood ; for Flanders was then the greatest manu-facturing country in Europe.

It was the practice of English kings to impose a tax on wool. Edward III. received annually £60,000 from this tax alone. Taxes were sometimes calculated, not in money, but in wool. The revenue thus gathered was largely used to pay for the numerous attempts made by Plantagenet kings to win the French crown : hence the friendship of Flanders was first secured. Thus, the Hundred Years' War was really paid for by the industrial section of the community.

85. Although Flanders was the great manufacturing country of Europe, England did not export thither all the wool pro-**English** duced. Some of it was manufactured in this **Manu-** country into the coarser kinds of cloth, such as **factures.** sacks, dairy-cloths, and sails for ships and windmills. The finer cloth manufactured in Flanders was very expensive. Some of it cost as much as fifteen shillings a yard. Edward III., therefore, made an attempt to in-troduce the weaving of fine woollen cloth into England. Flemish weavers, fullers, and dyers were invited to settle in England. The offer of constant work and high wages induced many Flemings to make their homes in this country. In London, Yorkshire, Gloucestershire, and the eastern counties, these settlers worked and taught the English the finer arts of weaving. Norwich soon became famous for its woollen manufactures. So keen was Edward III. to encourage this work that a law was made forbidding any one to wear cloth not made in England. Another law was passed later, forbidding the export of English wool. In course of time, instead of purchasing cloth from abroad, the English

began to export their own woollen manufactures to foreign markets. A great change was passing over the country. Hitherto, England had been almost exclusively an agricultural country ; but now field labourers could earn higher wages by becoming weavers. In those days, however, there were no machines and no great factories. The work was done chiefly in the homes of the weavers. But this domestic system of manufacture led to the growth of many towns and to the increase of wealth in the country.

86. During the Middle Ages, almost the whole of our foreign trade was in the hands of other countries. Bands of pirates infested the seas, and wars were being constantly waged on the Continent. For mutual protec- **The Hanse.** tion, therefore, foreign merchants banded themselves together into trading companies. Most powerful of these was the Hanse, or Hanseatic League, which was founded by North German merchants in the twelfth century. At first, twelve Baltic ports joined together, Lübeck, Hamburg, and Bremen being the chief. Many other towns afterwards joined, and thus increased the strength of the League. By the fourteenth century, the Hanseatic League had reached the height of its importance. It had fleets and armies ; it waged wars ; it made treaties with kings and emperors ; it controlled the entire trade of northern Europe, where it had branches or depots in every important town. The London branch of the League, known as the ' Steelyard,' was situated near the site of the present Cannon Street Station. For several centuries the Steelyard colony existed ; and, by means of it, English merchants were taught many valuable commercial lessons. But as our own merchants became more prosperous, they grew jealous of the German colony. In order, therefore, to pacify English traders, the Steelyard was deprived of many of its privileges during Tudor days. By degrees, the Hanseatic League itself became less prosperous ; until, at last, it ceased to exist. It had, however, done much to set English commerce upon a firm foundation.

87. During the Middle Ages, the reigning monarch lost no

opportunity of replenishing the royal coffers.   Certain com-
Staple   modities, such as wool, leather, furs, and. lead, were
Towns.   taxed.   It was, therefore, necessary to organise
the sale of such goods in order to facilitate the collection of the
customs, for which duty special officers were appointed.
Edward I. and Edward II., accordingly, granted to certain
towns the privilege of selling a particular ware.   In course of
time, many towns became either the seat of a certain manu-
facture, or the market where such manufactures were sold.
At first, such a market was known as the staple.   Later, the
term was applied to the commodity offered for sale.   Thus
English wool-growers would convey their produce to the town
which had become the staple for wool.   There they met foreign
merchants who had come to buy.   But only certain merchants
were allowed to deal in such markets or staple towns : hence
they were known as the Merchants of the Staple.

   With the object of preventing confusion and dispute,
Edward III. caused a law to be passed, in 1354, known as the
' Ordinance of the Staple.'   By this Act, all staple towns were
classified and named, so that traders would know exactly
where to send their goods for sale,   Even the ports from which
the goods were to be exported were named in the statute.   It
is important to bear in mind, also, that not all the staple towns
were in England.   Antwerp, Bruges, Calais, and other conti-
nental centres were, at one time or another, included in the list.

   88. The Peasants' Revolt, as already shown, led to the
extension of sheep-farming.   It had also an important effect
Richard II.   upon the influence wielded by Parliament.   A
Deposed.   better system of government was needed, calculated
to allay the spirit of unrest so prevalent in the land.   But the
nobles were divided by personal jealousies : consequently,
the House of Commons was deprived of much-needed support
which the Upper Chamber might otherwise have offered.   Of
this lack of unity the King, Richard II., made full use.   He
was foolishly eager to make himself despotic ; and he almost
succeeded in achieving his object during the last two years of
his reign.   But his unconstitutional action resulted in uniting

against himself both Lords and Commons, and he was compelled to abdicate.   Richard II. is usually regarded as the last sovereign of the Plantagenet line, which, by his deposition, came to an ignominious end.

Houses of Lancaster and York (1399 to 1485)

89. Hereditary succession to the throne had been rapidly becoming customary during the Plantagenet period.   But the Parliament that deposed the last of that line of **Parliament** kings decided to elect his successor.   Their choice **Elects the** fell, not upon the real heir, but upon Henry, Duke **King.** of Hereford, the more popular cousin of the late sovereign. The new King was crowned as Henry IV.

90. Henry IV. realised that he owed his kingdom to the election of Parliament; the Crown was not his by right of birth.   Consequently, he was anxious not to offend **Power of the** Parliament in any way.   When the question of mak- **Commons.** ing grants of money for the expenses of administration arose, Parliament seized the opportunity to increase its power in three special directions : viz. (1) Grants were made *conditional*; *i.e.* money was only voted to the Crown 'on condition that the amount should be expended solely for the defence of the realm.' (2) Supplies were *appropriated*; *i.e.* the money granted had to be expended on definite objects under the supervision of treasurers appointed by Parliament.   (3) Accounts were *examined*; *i.e.* a detailed statement had to be submitted by the treasurer to the House of Commons at the next Parliament. In various other ways the power of the House of Commons increased during the reign of the first Lancastrian King.

91. In 1413, Henry IV. was succeeded by his son Henry V. The new King was possessed of a warlike temperament.   Under him, as we have already seen, the Hundred Years' **Wars of the** War was continued with vigour, and English **Roses.** arms were attended with considerable success.   But his reign was brief ; and, in 1422, he was succeeded by his weak-willed son, Henry VI.

Our attempt to conquer France having failed, England again became the scene of much discontent. The power of the nobility had increased enormously. It was felt that the Lancastrians were not the rightful heirs to the throne. Other claimants arose. By degrees, these were merged into two definite parties, one supporting the reigning House, the other the rival House of York. In 1455, civil war broke out; and, for thirty years, the noble houses of England lent their aid to the cause of Lancaster or York. Each side took a rose as its badge—Lancaster a red rose, York a white one.

It is unnecessary to enter into the details of the struggle. The rank and file of the armies was constituted mainly of mercenaries, that is, hired soldiers who, now that the Hundred Years' War was at an end, were ready to sell their services to the highest bidder. For the most part, the commoners of England took no share in the strife, but continued their usual occupations. Many battles were fought; and, at Bosworth Field in Leicestershire, Richard iii., the Yorkist King, was slain in 1485. With his successor began a new line of kings— the Tudors.

92. It is refreshing to learn that, even whilst the Wars of the Roses were being fought, progress was made in the arts **The Re-** of peace. Two years before the outbreak of the **naissance.** strife, an event occurred in Europe which was destined to bestow permanent benefit upon mankind.

In 1453, the Turks captured Constantinople. Prior to this, the city was in the hands of Christians, many of whom were Greek scholars. Constantinople was then, in fact, the chief seat of learning in Europe. Its libraries were world-famed, containing as they did numbers of priceless manuscripts, the works of Greek and Roman writers. But the Turks detested both the Christians and their books. Consequently, many of the libraries were destroyed, and thus the world was deprived of numerous writings of great value. Some of the students were also caught and slain. Those who escaped carried away the precious rolls of parchment they delighted to study. Wherever they went, the scholars were glad to teach the Latin

and Greek languages in order to maintain themselves.   For the most part, learning had been confined to the monks and clergy.   But the enthusiasm and needs of the wandering scholars produced a desire for learning in the breasts of many to whom such studies had been hitherto denied.   All classes of people in many of the towns of Europe were eager to avail themselves of the proffered instruction.   Thus a great demand for books arose.   But in those days books were not printed. They were copied slowly by hand, chiefly by the monks : hence the making of even one book sometimes occupied them for years.   A great and wonderful change, however, was pending.

This ' New Learning ' is known as the ' Renaissance,' *i.e.* the New Birth.   But although it sprang up during the closing years of the fifteenth century, the full effect of the revival of learning was not felt until a later date.

93. The great and wonderful change, referred to in the preceding section, was due to the invention of printing from movable types.   It is uncertain where, when, **Caxton, the** and by whom this invention was introduced.   By **Printer.** many authorities, the honour is ascribed to John Gutenberg of Mentz (Mainz).   Long before the days of Gutenberg, however, a crude kind of printing was known.   But in those early attempts, the whole page was cut out on wood by the engraver : movable type was unknown.   It was the introduction of movable, *metal* type, about the middle of the fifteenth century, that gave the much-needed impetus to the art of printing. By means of this, books could be made much more cheaply and quickly than before.   The first printed book, issued about 1455, was the complete Bible, in Latin.

But, although the exact date of the introduction of printing by means of movable type is uncertain, we do know definitely when the first printing-press was set up in England.   In 1441, there happened to be living in Bruges an English youth named William Caxton.   He had served an apprenticeship to a wealthy cloth merchant in London, and had crossed to Belgium to work there at his trade.   In course of time he set up in business as a cloth merchant, and rapidly rose to a position of import-

ance in Bruges. His leisure hours were devoted to reading and translating. He became so famous as a copyist and translator, that the Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV., employed him as her secretary. One of his works was an English translation of a French book, entitled *Tales of Troy*. The Duchess, to whom it was presented, was so delighted that she showed it to many of her friends, who asked Caxton to make translations for them. But the task of making so many copies by hand would be slow and wearisome. Caxton, therefore, set out for Cologne to learn the new art of printing. He then returned to Bruges, where he set up his own printing-press. There he produced, about 1472, the first book in English that came from any press, namely, *Tales of Troy*. In 1476, he returned to England, carrying with him both printing-press and types. Near Westminster Abbey his press was set up, and there were produced the first books ever printed in England. Before his death in 1491, Caxton printed nearly eighty volumes.

It has been well said that ' knowledge is power.' Good books are the key to knowledge. The printing-press may, therefore, be regarded as one of the most beneficent of inventions ; and English people will always hold the name, William Caxton, in high esteem.

94. There have never been wanting great writers whose
Chaucer. works are worthy of the permanence of print. During the Middle Ages, the great literary star in England was the poet, Geoffrey Chaucer.

Chaucer was born in the early years of the fourteenth century. Much information concerning his life and writings is derived from his own works. He describes himself as a Londoner; and it is probable that he resided during his early life near old London Bridge. He had an official appointment, and once went abroad on a diplomatic mission.

Chaucer's most famous work is *The Canterbury Tales*. This was written in his old age at the quiet country retreat of Woodstock. The poem describes how a band of about thirty pilgrims met at the Tabard Inn in Southwark, London, and thence journeyed to the t mb of St. Thomas à Becket at Canter-

bury. Chaucer's plan was to make each member of the party relate two stories on the outward journey, and two others during the homeward-way. A supper at the Inn was to conclude the proceedings, and he who had related the best story was to be entertained by the rest of the company.

The poet did not complete his plan. Only twenty-four tales are related, two of which are in prose. But the work is valuable not only as literature, but also as furnishing many details concerning the social life of the period. Every character is vividly described; and, as all classes of the community were represented—except the highest noble—much valuable information is gained from Chaucer's poem concerning the dress and manners of those days.

Chaucer died in 1400, and was buried in Westminster Abbey among the noblest of England's dead.

95. Throughout the Middle Ages, the pilgrimage was a fashionable undertaking. Various shrines were visited, that of St. Thomas à Becket of Canterbury being the most famous. At first, these journeys were **Pilgrimages.** undertaken for religious purposes. In course of time, however, they came to be regarded as a means of securing a pleasant change from the stagnant surroundings of home-life.

All classes of the community, except perhaps the highest noble and the humblest peasant, took part in these journeys. Among the pilgrims mentioned by Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales* are the knight, the squire, the lawyer, the priest, the nun, the miller, the doctor, the sailor, the cook, and many others.

A pilgrimage in those days was no light undertaking, for the roads were infested with footpads and ruffians on the lookout for easy prey. It was customary, therefore, for the pilgrims to travel in parties, frequently attended by armed men. Because of the menace of highwaymen, a law was passed in the reign of Edward I. requiring the clearing of all lands (for the distance of a bow-shot) on each side of the great highways.

The shocking condition of the roads added further to the trials of the pilgrims ; in fact, progress was only possible on

horseback or on foot. Travel was necessarily slow : hence inns and alehouses were numerous along the highways. The latter could be easily distinguished by the long pole surmounted by a bush usually set up opposite the entrance : hence, it is said, the proverb, ' Good wine needs no bush.'

But pilgrims were not the only wayfarers. Minstrels, pedlars, quack-doctors, messengers, and merchants frequented the highways. Over them, too, passed the merchandise of the country, by means of pack-horses or rumbling, clumsy wagons.

96. Reference has been made to the lack of sanitation in the Middle Ages. The streets were narrow and badly drained.

Leprosy. Moreover, they contained the refuse of the surrounding dwellings. Many of the inhabitants, too, were lacking in personal cleanliness. Consequently, disease was rife, especially among the poorer classes.

The terrible scourge of leprosy worked havoc among the people of England during the Middle Ages. All who were attacked by the disease—both rich and poor—were regarded as outcasts. They were driven from the society of their fellows. In course of time, special hospitals were erected in certain places for the treatment of lepers. In some of our old churches there may still be seen ' leper-windows.' These are usually situated in the sanctuary wall, and are extremely small. Lepers were not permitted to enter the church. They were allowed, however, to approach the leper-window, in order to gaze at the Holy Table and receive the sacred elements placed in the window by the priest.

Leprosy was infinitely worse than the Plague. It was a ' living death,' whereas the latter speedily terminated the sufferings of the victim. As lepers were forbidden to associate with the ' clean,' it was impossible for them to engage in any occupation. Consequently, poor lepers were permitted to ask alms in order to support themselves, whilst the wealthy sufferers shut themselves up in remote mansions.

Improved sanitation led to the gradual extinction of leprosy. There were few lepers in England at the beginning of the fifteenth century ; and it is definitely asserted that, ere the

end of that century, the disease had been stamped out in this country. It still exists, however, in some parts of the world.

97. Many of the amusements common to pre-Plantagenet days continued to engage the attention of all classes in the Middle Ages. For the most part, the peasants found an outlet for their superfluous energy in leaping, wrestling, shooting, and dancing. The tournament was also a fashionable recreation with the wealthier classes.

Pastimes.

But the most noteworthy pastime of the Middle Ages was the mystery ' or ' miracle ' play. At first the ' mystery ' was distinct from the ' miracle,' the former being ' a play based upon the Bible Story,' and the latter a dramatised account of the life of some popular Saint.' In course of time, however, the two came to be described indifferently as miracle plays.

There was no regular drama in those days. Miracle plays were at first acted by the priests in the churches in order to instruct the ignorant more effectively in Bible lore. As the congregations increased in size, it became necessary to perform the plays in the churchyard. Here, however, much damage was done to the graves by the assembled multitude. A further change was accordingly made, namely, to some suitable, open space in the town or village. By this time, the clergy themselves had ceased to take any active part in the performances, their places being readily taken by numerous laymen.

A writer of the sixteenth century gives a vivid account of the preparations made for the performance of a miracle play. It appears that it was customary to erect a two-tier scaffold on four wheels. On the lower stage, the performers apparelled themselves, whilst upon the upper platform, open to the spectators, they played their various parts.

So popular did these plays become that, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, it was customary to perform a series of plays covering the whole of the Old and New Testament stories. Closely associated with these performances were the several craft-gilds of the locality. Each gild usually made itself responsible for the representation of one or more stories ; and it is recorded that the series consisted of forty-eight plays,

the acting of which occupied eight days. Several stories were enacted simultaneously in different parts of the town, the movable stages being drawn from one site to another until each set of spectators had witnessed the whole series.

The subjects chosen for staging were the most striking incidents recorded in the Bible ; and the series usually embraced the whole of the sacred history from the Creation to the Last Judgment. It sometimes happened that a triple stage was used, that is, three platforms one above another. On the topmost, representing Heaven, the group of actors personated the Almighty. The redeemed were represented on the second tier ; while upon the lowest platform the performers imitated the affairs of mankind upon earth.

A favourite season for the production of miracle plays was the feast of Corpus Christi, that is, the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. This was an occasion of great rejoicing, the craft-gilds observing the day as a public holiday. Whitsuntide was sometimes chosen, instead of the feast of Corpus Christi, for presenting the series of plays. Two reasons may be assigned for the choice of both Whitsuntide and Corpus Christi, namely : (1) they were popular festivals and holidays ; (2) the time of year (late May or early June) was favourable for open-air pastimes.

Early in the fifteenth century, English drama underwent a change. The miracle play gave place to the moral play. Instead of Scripture characters, there began to be represented by actors such qualities as Justice, Mercy, Truth, Vice, Gluttony, Temperance, etc. It was the aim in these plays to portray the life-long battle that ensues between the Seven Cardinal Virtues and the Seven Deadly Sins, for the human soul. Thus the way was paved for the introduction of the secular element into English drama.

98. A brief reference must be made to the great benefit bestowed upon humanity by John Wycliffe. To him is due **The First** the honour and merit of having given to England **English** the first English version of the *whole* Bible. Prior **Bible.** to this, the sacred Scriptures were in the Latin tongue, the volume being commonly known as the Vulgate.

It was the aim of Wycliffe to make the Bible an open book, that is, one that could be read by the mass of the people.

Wycliffe sought the aid of other pens in the gigantic under-taking; but much of the work was the result of his own labours. Portions of the Bible had already been translated into English, but the task of rendering the whole in the vulgar tongue was the self-imposed work of the great reformer. The translation was not without defects; but its appearance made easier the work of Wycliffe's successors during the great English Reformation.

CHRONOLOGY

PART I. (55 B.C. to A.D. 1485)

Roman Period

55 B.C. . Julius Caesar's First Invasion of Britain : landed near Dover and defeated the opposing Britons : withdrew about seventeen days later.

54 . . Julius Caesar's Second Invasion of Britain : remained about three weeks : defeated Cassivelaunus, the British chief, and captured Verulamium (St. Albans).

54 B.C. to } Britain remained unmolested by the Romans.
43 A D. }

43 A.D. . Beginning of the Roman Occupation of Britain : Roman troops, under Aulus Plautius, sent by the Emperor Claudius : the Emperor himself visited Britain later in the year : the British chief, Caractacus (Caradoc), defeated.

51 . . Caractacus defeated by Ostorius Scapula and sent prisoner to Rome, together with his wife and family.

61 . . The Iceni, under Queen Boadicea, revolted and massacred many Romans.

62 . . Defeat of Boadicea by Suetonius Paulinus : suicide of Boadicea : Mona (Anglesey) captured by the Romans.

78 . . Julius Agricola appointed Governor of Britain.

81 . . Agricola caused a chain of forts to be constructed between the Firths of Forth and Clyde to hold the Caledonians in check. Roman fleet sailed round Britain.

85 . . Agricola recalled to Rome. During his Governorship of Britain he had invaded both Wales and Caledonia, and had instructed the natives in the arts of peace.

121 . Emperor Hadrian's wall constructed—a series of strong forts from the Solway Firth to the mouth of the Tyne.

139 . Antoninus Pius (afterwards Emperor) strengthened Agricola's works (Forth to Clyde) by an earthen rampart.

208 . Hadrian's Wall (Solway to Tyne) replaced by stone wall by the Emperor Severus.

286 . East coast of Britain ravaged by Saxon pirates : ' Count of the Saxon Shore ' appointed.

304 A.D.	.	St. Alban put to death—the first British martyr.
410	.	End of Roman Occupation of Britain : legions recalled to defend Rome.

Anglo-Saxon Period

449	.	Landing of the Jutes under Hengist and Horsa, in Thanet.
449-586	.	Jutes, Angles, and Saxons settle in Britain, and establish seven separate kingdoms :—
457	.	1. Kent ; founded by the Jutes, under Hengist.
490	.	2. South Saxony (Sussex and part of Surrey) ; founded by Ella.
519	.	3. Wessex (Hants, Dorset, Berks, and Wilts) ; founded by Cerdic.
527	.	4. Essex (including Middlesex and part of Herts) ; founded by Ercenwin.
547	.	5. Bernicia (Tees to Forth) ; founded by Ida.
560	.	6. Deira (Yorks, Lancashire, Durham, and Westmoreland) ; founded by Ella.
571	.	7. East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, Beds) ; by Uffa.
586	.	8. Mercia (Thames to Humber and Severn to Beds) ; by Cridda.
		[Nos. 5 and 6 were subsequently merged in one kingdom known as Northumbria.]
597	.	Conversion of the English to Christianity by St. Augustine sent by Pope Gregory.
664	.	Caedmon, the first English poet, a monk of Whitby Abbey.
755	.	Death of Bede, a learned monk of Jarrow ; author of the first Saxon prose writings.
787	.	Danish invasions began.
800	.	Egbert became King of Wessex ; subsequently known as the ' First King of the English.'
871	.	Accession of Alfred the Great : defeat of the Danes at Wilton (Wilts).
878	.	Defeat of the Danes by Alfred at Ethandune (Wilts) : Treaty of Wedmore (Danelagh established).
1016-1042		Danish kings rule in England.
1042	.	Saxon line restored—Edward the Confessor became King.

1066 A.D.   Battle of Senlac ; Harold, the last old English king. slain.

The Norman Period

1066   .   Accession of William I., surnamed the Conqueror.
1071   .   Ely captured : completion of the Conquest.
1086   .   Domesday Book compiled.

     Great meeting of landholders on Salisbury Plain took the oath of allegiance to the Conqueror.

     Canon Law established—special courts for the trial of offending clergy.

1095   .   The First Crusade commenced.
1099   .   Jerusalem captured by the Crusaders.
1100   .   Henry I. granted a Charter of Liberties.
1105   .   Colonies of Flemings began to settle in England.
1153   .   Treaty of Wallingford (Matilda's son, Henry, recognised as Stephen's heir).

Plantagenet Period

1154   .   Accession of Henry II. : he also ruled over the greater part of France.
1159   .   Scutage (shield-money) imposed in lieu of military service.
1162   .   Thomas Becket appointed Archbishop of Canterbury.
1164   .   Constitutions of Clarendon drawn up.
1170   .   Becket murdered in Canterbury Cathedral.
1176   .   Assize of Northampton (six circuits allotted to travelling justices).
1187   .   Jerusalem retaken by Saladin.
1189   .   Third Crusade commenced.
1190   .   Richard I. (Cœur de Lion) joined the Crusaders.
1204   .   Loss of Normandy. Aquitaine the only English possession left in France.
1208   .   The Pope lays England under an interdict.
1213   .   John submits to the Pope as vassal.
1215   .   Magna Charta sealed by John.
1258   .   The Mad Parliament. The Provisions of Oxford.
1264-5   .   The Barons' War.
1264   .   Battle of Lewes. Henry III. taken prisoner by Simon de Montfort.
1265   .   'The First House of Commons.' De Montfort slain at the Battle of Evesham.

1279 A.D.		Statute of Mortmain passed.
1283	.	Conquest of Wales by Edward I.
1284	.	Prince Edward born at Carnarvon Castle.
1285	.	Assize Courts commenced regular ' sittings.'
1290	.	Edward I. banished Jews from England : recalled by Oliver Cromwell (17th cent.).
1292	.	John Baliol crowned at Scone.
1295	.	Model Parliament convened.
1297	.	Confirmatio Cartarum passed (Confirmation of the Charters of Henry I. and John).
1303	.	Carta Mercatoria passed (Magna Charta of Commerce).
1306	.	Robert Bruce crowned at Scone.
1314	.	Defeat of the English at Bannockburn.
1327	.	Edward II. deposed by Parliament.
1348	.	The Black Death broke out at Melcombe Regis, Dorset.
1349-1351		Statutes of Labourers.
1362	.	The English Language superseded Norman-French in English Law-Courts.
1381	.	The Peasants' Revolt. Wycliffe's translation of the Bible into English completed.
1384	.	Death of John Wycliffe at Lutterworth, Leicestershire.
1399	.	Richard II. compelled by Parliament to abdicate.
1400	.	Death of Geoffrey Chaucer, the poet.
1428	.	Siege of Orleans : cannon first used.
1429	.	Joan of Arc relieves Orleans.
1450	.	Jack Cade's Rebellion.
1476	.	Caxton's printing-press set up at Westminster.
1485	.	Richard III. slain at Bosworth Field (Leicestershire) : end of the Plantagenets (including York and Lancaster).

SOVEREIGNS OF ENGLAND

Early Saxon Period

Egbert (afterwards ' King of the English ') .	800-836
Ethelwulf	836-858
Ethelbald	858-860
Ethelbert	860-866
Ethelred I.	866-871
Alfred the Great	871-901
Edward I. (the Elder)	901-925
Athelstan	925-940

Edmund I.	.	.	.	.	.	.	940-946
Edred	.	.	.	.	.	.	946-955
Edwy	.	.	.	.	.	.	955-959
Edgar (the Peaceful)	.	.	.	.	.	959-975
Edward II. (the Martyr)	.	.	.	.	975-978
Ethelred II. (the Unready)	.	.	.	.	978-1016
Edmund II. (Ironside)	.	.	.	.	1016

Danish Period

Canute	.	.	.	.	.	.	1016-1037
Harold I. (Harefoot)	.	.	.	.	.	1037-1040
Hardicanute	.	.	.	.	.	1040-1042

Later Saxon Period

| Edward, the Confessor | . | . | . | . | 1042-1066 |
| Harold II. (son of Godwin) | . | . | . | . | 1066 |

Norman Period

William I. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1066-1087
William II.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1087-1100
Henry I. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1100-1135
Stephen	.	.	.	.	.	.	1135-1154

Plantagenet Period

Henry II. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1154-1189
Richard I. (Cœur de Lion)	.	.	.	.	1189-1199
John	.	.	.	.	.	.	1199-1216
Henry III. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1216-1272
Edward I. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1272-1307
Edward II.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1307-1327
Edward III.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1327-1377
Richard II.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1377-1399

House of Lancaster

Henry IV. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1399-1413
Henry V. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1413-1422
Henry VI. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1422-1461

House of York

Edward IV.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1461-1483
Edward V. .	.	.	.	.	.	.	1483
Richard III.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1483-1485